United Nations A/68/88–E/2013/81

General Assembly
Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
17 May 2013

Original: English

General Assembly
Sixty-eighth session
Item 22 (a) of the preliminary list*
Groups of countries in special situations: follow-up to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

Economic and Social Council
Substantive session of 2013
Geneva, July 2013
Item 6 (b) of the provisional agenda**
Implementation of and follow-up to major international United Nations conferences and summits: review and coordination of the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020

Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 67/220 and Economic and Social Council resolution 2012/26, in which the Secretary-General was requested to submit a progress report on the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 (Istanbul Programme of Action).

* A/68/50.
** E/2013/100.

13-33975 (E) 210613

Please recycle

I. Introduction

1. The Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 (Istanbul Programme of Action), which was adopted by the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries in 2011, is the expression of the commitments of the global community in favour of poverty eradication, structural transformation and sustainable development in the least developed countries. The Programme is articulated around eight priority areas of action, with 47 goals and targets to be achieved by 2020 (see A/67/88-E/2012/75 and Corr.1). Implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action is anchored by a number of follow-up and monitoring mechanisms. The present report is one such mechanism.

2. Section II of the present report contains an overview of the recent performance and prospects of the least developed countries. Section III builds on the baseline set in the previous report (A/67/88-E/2012/75 and Corr.1) and provides an analysis of the rate of progress with respect to the goals and targets of the Istanbul Programme of Action. Due consideration is given to the issue of productive employment in the least developed countries, which is closely linked to productive capacity-building and is a precondition for poverty eradication. Section IV provides an overview of measures deployed by development partners and other stakeholders in advancing the implementation of the Programme of Action. Section V presents an update on the status of graduation of several of the least developed countries, as well as the deliberations of the General Assembly on their smooth transition. Section VI contains some conclusions and policy recommendations on advancing the implementation of the Programme of Action, and its reflection in the post-2015 development agenda.

II. Recent performance and prospects

Recent economic trends and short-term outlook[1]

3. The first year of implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action coincided with the deceleration in global output, which had some reverberating effects on the economies of the least developed countries. As global economic growth weakened, private inflows, in particular foreign direct investment (FDI), declined for the third consecutive year, and official development flows stagnated after years of steady increases. Combined with some country-specific factors, in particular political turmoil and lower oil and agricultural outputs, these developments hampered growth in a number of the least developed countries. Average gross domestic product (GDP) of the least developed countries expanded by only 4 per cent in 2011 compared with the annual average growth rate of 7.3 per cent achieved from 2001 to 2010. There was a decline in the number of least developed countries that grew at 7 per cent or more, the target set in the Programme of Action, from 15 during the period 2001-2010 to 11 in 2011.

4. Performance varied significantly across the least developed countries. Owing to a host of factors, especially a decline in oil production, growth in 2011 in such large least developed economies as Angola, Equatorial Guinea and the Sudan was at

[1] Statistical data concerning the goals and targets are presented in the annex.

a pace well below their decade averages. Similar factors pushed Yemen's GDP growth into negative territory in 2011.

5. By contrast, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Ethiopia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mozambique, Rwanda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda sustained high-level growth rates similar to those recorded during much of the past decade, expanding at close to or more than 7 per cent in 2011. Rising investment rates and a strong showing by sectors other than agriculture appear to be the common threads among these countries; their experience suggests that sectoral changes have been taking place in these economies. However, it remains unclear whether such changes herald a beginning of structural transformation in these economies and, if that is the case, whether these changes are sustainable.

6. A sectoral breakdown of GDP reveals that the share of agriculture decreased in 2011 compared with the decade average, although more strongly in African least developed countries (-6 per cent) than in those in Asia and the Pacific (-2 per cent). However, a declining share of agriculture did not imply reduced output but rather a relatively modest expansion, particularly when compared with the rate of growth of non-agricultural sectors. Further, except in a few fast-growing least developed countries, the share of manufacturing stagnated. Despite its reduced share in GDP, agriculture still employed the largest proportion, albeit one in decline, of the labour force. This points not only to weak labour productivity growth in agriculture and in the economy in general, but also to scant labour absorption in non-agricultural sectors.

7. The limited absorption by non-agricultural sectors of the excess agricultural labour force owed much to the nature of the production processes and the type of goods and services produced by these sectors. On the one hand, some of these sectors are capital intensive, especially mining. On the other hand, thriving sectors like construction and transportation are non-tradable, thus relying solely on small domestic markets. The continued expansion of these non-tradable sectors, and therefore their ability to absorb surplus agriculture labour, may have been constrained because the least developed countries were unable to tap into vast and dynamic international markets. A major consequence of these growth patterns is that economic expansion did not translate into meaningful poverty reduction and poverty rates continued to be alarmingly high. One half of the 880 million people in the least developed countries continue to live on less than $1.25 a day. The persistence of widespread extreme poverty in the least developed countries poses a serious challenge to realizing the goals of the Istanbul Programme of Action and for defining the post-2015 United Nations development agenda.

8. Gross capital formation as a percentage of GDP was in the region of 22-23 per cent in the least developed countries. These figures increased significantly in Cambodia and the United Republic of Tanzania, and moderately in Bhutan, Mozambique, Rwanda and Uganda. Other least developed countries with consistently strong economic growth, such as Ethiopia, maintained investment rates of 25 per cent, which were close to the levels sustained over the past decade. Part of the driving force behind investment rates in many of these countries was large public investment, particularly in the development of infrastructure, and in some cases the growth of private investment.

9. Following steep declines in trade flows in 2009, recovery continued in 2011. Merchandise represented 87 per cent of total exports. Primary commodities accounted for nearly 70 per cent of total merchandise exports, with a much higher

share in the African least developed countries (84 per cent) than in the least developed countries in Asia and the Pacific (38 per cent). By contrast, the share of manufactured goods in total exports dropped to 20 per cent, largely driven by the relative decline in exports of clothing. The same held true for services, the share of which stood at 9 per cent of total exports. This high dependence on primary commodities made the least developed countries more vulnerable to fluctuations in commodity markets.

Estimates for 2012 and outlook for 2013

10. Most of the factors that led to the weakening of global economic growth in 2011 persisted and sometimes deepened in 2012. Many developed countries continued to be trapped in a vicious circle of financial fragility, high and unsustainable public debt, excessive fiscal consolidation, weak aggregate demand and growth, and high unemployment rates. The deterioration of macroeconomic conditions in developed countries affected growth elsewhere, thus causing a global slowdown.

11. The external environment combined with domestic factors, including political tensions, growing insecurity, and poor weather conditions, contributed to the weakening of economic activity in some of the least developed countries. Aggregate GDP growth for the group is estimated to have decelerated to 3.3 per cent in 2012, with the sharpest deceleration having occurred in the African least developed countries.[2]

12. Part of the downturn in the African least developed countries is attributable to the severe economic contraction in the Sudan and South Sudan, caused in large part by the steep decline in oil production and exports. The economies of the least developed countries in Asia and the Pacific held up relatively well, with their average GDP advancing by 5.1 per cent, although below the average for the past decade.

13. Projected slight improvements in global growth in 2013 and such country-specific factors as a revival of activity in the oil sector in South Sudan are expected to lift economic growth in the least developed countries. GDP growth for the group is forecast to expand by 6.5 per cent in 2013. However, this improved outlook is subject to a number of downside risks, such as weather-related shocks, regional insecurity and political tensions, as well as uncertain prospects of the global economy, which could result in lower demand for the exports of the least developed countries and shortfalls in aid and private flows. The aforementioned risks depict the vulnerability of the least developed countries, including the very few that have weathered the global slowdown relatively well.

III. Progress in the implementation of key priorities of the Istanbul Programme of Action

14. An assessment of progress in the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action during the two years following its adoption presents a mixed picture. The least developed countries have made some progress in regard to many of the goals

[2] Estimates of the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States are based on data from the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat (2013) and data from the International Monetary Fund (2013).

and targets agreed in Istanbul. Structural change also seems to be taking hold in a few of them, in particular those that have sustained a high-level of GDP growth. There has also been progress, albeit moderate, in some social indicators.

15. Yet, the reality for most of the least developed countries continues to remain one of pervasive poverty, rising inequality, a stagnant share of manufacturing in GDP, continued low, economy-wide productivity, insufficient generation of decent jobs and continued vulnerability. More worrisome, the deteriorating global economic environment is being transmitted to the least developed countries through declining FDI and official development assistance (ODA) flows, therefore putting at risk hard-won gains and the ability to expand such gains to all of them.

16. It is encouraging that many of the least developed countries have embarked on integrating the priorities and goals of the Istanbul Programme of Action into their national development strategies and programmes. A few of the least developed countries have announced their intent to graduate by or around the end of the present decade. Many donors have also taken into account the priorities and concerns of the least developed countries expressed the Programme of Action, and deployed efforts to streamline their development aid strategies and provide more focused, less fragmented and more effective aid.

17. Within the United Nations system, the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States has continued to fulfil its functions of assisting the Secretary-General in providing effective follow-up and monitoring of the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action and mobilizing international support and resources for its effective implementation. The number of organizations of the United Nations system that have taken decisions to implement and mainstream the Programme of Action has increased further over the past year. Other stakeholders, including parliaments, civil society and the private sector, are also contributing to its monitoring and implementation.

18. Main developments in the eight priority areas of the Istanbul Programme of Action are summarized below.

Productive capacity

Infrastructure

19. Access to information and communications technologies continued to improve in 2011, with both mobile cellular and Internet subscriptions increasing, although at varying speeds. The most impressive growth occurred in mobile telephony, where almost 42 per cent of the population of the least developed countries had access to mobile cellular subscriptions in 2011, up from 33 per cent in 2010. However, this average may mask disparities across and within the least developed countries in regard to such access.[3] Developments in the Internet market continued at a slower rate than in mobile telephony. The number of Internet subscriptions per 100 habitants in the least developed countries rose slightly, from 4.4 per cent in 2010 to 5.3 per cent in 2011, and most subscriptions were limited to low speeds, thus reducing the scope for applications and services.

[3] The percentage of users in total population is likely to be lower than that of subscribers given that customers often have multiple SIM cards.

20. The recent progress made in this sector is attributable in part to the introduction of competition in the provision of mobile telephony services, with new operators entering the market and competing with the State-owned telecommunication operator. On the whole, factors that hold back access to the Internet include, among others: relatively low educational and literacy rates; poor infrastructure and connectivity, including connection to expensive congested international circuits; lack of affordability; and limited or lack of access to electricity.

21. Increased public investment, mostly funded through multilateral and regional banks and through South-South cooperation arrangements, aided by some institutional reforms, have enabled many of the least developed countries to expand their total road mileage. Despite this progress, road conditions in the least developed countries are below the standards prevailing in other developing countries. As physical infrastructure in road transport improves in some of the least developed countries, soft infrastructure issues, including institutional and regulatory aspects of road transport, have emerged as serious impediments to transport and cross-border trade efficiency, as in the case of the high road transport tariffs in some West and Central African least developed countries.

22. Railway traffic on existing passenger and freight lines shrank, causing many of the least developed countries to grant concessions to private operators. This has led to improvements in service and recovery in traffic. Yet, many railways systems still do not generate sufficient revenue for expanding and improving existing networks. The recent commodity boom has prompted a renewed interest in and a commitment to railway rehabilitation and expansion. The new projects and initiatives for railway rehabilitation and expansion face a number of challenges, including the complexity of financial arrangements, the conditions of financing, and an inadequate institutional and regulatory framework guiding the functioning of the railway networks.

23. Recent trends in the Liner Shipping Connectivity Index, which helps gauge how well countries are linked to global shipping networks, suggests some progress in the least developed countries, albeit marginal. The index for all least developed countries rose to 7.3 in 2011 from 7.1 in 2010, compared with China at 156. There were significant differences in the index across the least developed countries, highlighted by the gap between Djibouti at 21 and Kiribati at 5.

24. Maritime infrastructure and services continue to be below par. Removing obstacles to efficient and effective maritime transport will require, among other actions, refurbishing port physical infrastructure and linking it to the other transport modes, simplifying procedures in order to cut handling costs and dwell times, and improving port management.

25. The demise of many national and regional airlines during the past decade limited access to air transport. With new airlines emerging, the situation has improved somewhat but flight frequency and traffic remain relatively low. Moreover, these new airlines are often small, under-capitalized, suffer cost disadvantages over bigger foreign airlines and lack the ability to run international routes. Airport infrastructure challenges are substantial, with runways often in poor condition, traffic control communications outdated, and facilities which have limited capacity to handle transit passengers.

Energy

26. The lack of access to modern forms of energy is a major impediment to sustainable development, as it exacerbates the vulnerability of the chronically poor. In the least developed countries, 79 per cent of people lacked access to electricity while 91 per cent of the population had no access to modern fuels. The rural-urban divide in terms of access to energy was even more pronounced. The percentage of urban dwellers with access to modern fuels stood at 27 per cent, compared with only 3 per cent for rural dwellers.[4] Making renewable energy available to the least developed countries will greatly and rapidly transform lives from the perspective of improvement in health, equity and empowerment of women, income-generating activities and environmental sustainability.

27. The lack of access to energy contrasts with the fact that the majority of the least developed countries are endowed with vast energy resources which are yet to be fully tapped. Only a few countries, among them Bhutan, Ethiopia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic, have made progress in this sector, mainly due to investments launched prior to adoption of the Istanbul Programme of Action. Ambitious plans for multi-megawatt renewable power installations were also announced in 2011 in several African least developed countries, including Lesotho (wind), Guinea (solar) and Rwanda (geothermal). Some of the least developed countries have successfully stimulated rural electrification projects by mainstreaming renewable energies as a central technology option in national energy strategies.

28. Improving energy access, affordability, quantity, quality and sustainability will require the use of new innovative financing schemes and close cooperation with the private sector. It will also be necessary to enhance the management of utility companies, improve the regulatory frameworks guiding the production and transmission of power, increase cross-border power trade, and expand access to energy among under-served groups or areas.

Science, technology and innovation

29. The state of science, technology and innovation in the least developed countries, which is a cross-cutting theme of the Istanbul Programme of Action, remains poor. Research and development expenditure as a percentage of GDP barely registered in 2011 in the majority of these counties. Limited resources, including a narrow base of science-literate citizens, contributed to the scant generation, diffusion and application of scientific knowledge in the least developed countries.

30. The intellectual property rights regimes overseen by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS Agreement) provide time-bound exemptions that enable the least developed countries to access technologies that are essential to their development. One of the shortcomings of article 66.1 of the TRIPS Agreement is its temporal nature. The least developed countries were given an initial 10-year transition period to comply with the Agreement. This exemption was extended twice and is now set to expire on 1 July

[4] United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and World Health Organization (WHO), *The Energy Access Situation in Developing Countries: A Review Focusing on the Least Developed Countries and sub-Saharan Africa* (New York, November 2009). The latest available data are for 2007.

2013. Article 66.2 states the obligation of developed countries to provide incentives for the transfer of technology to the least developed countries which have called for this requirement to be made more effective.

Private sector development

31. Private sector development in the least developed countries continues to be constrained by access to financing, shortage of skills and poor physical infrastructure. Most firms are either small or large, and the consequent lack of medium-sized enterprises reduces the scope for inter-firm linkages. The absence of such firms also hampers opportunities for innovation, learning and skills development.

32. Most enterprises in the least developed countries operate in the informal sector which accounts for a significant share of economic activity and employment. The low productivity of the sector arises from low levels of capital, skills and technology and limited access to organized markets. The sector also operates outside the realm of official policymaking, inter alia, paying few taxes and making little in the way of social contributions, but it is legal in all other aspects. The challenge is to facilitate its transition to the formal sector, thus enabling the least developed countries to fully harness their potential for growth and employment.

33. Most local firms are not connected to global value chains and therefore are not in a position to benefit from opportunities for rapid technological learning and improved productivity.

Agriculture, food security and rural development

34. The proportion of undernourished people in the least developed countries has declined steadily during the past decade, moving from an average of 37.9 per cent in 1990-1992 to an average of 30.6 per cent for the period 2010-2012. Despite this progress, the proportion of undernourished in the total population was the highest among all groups of countries. Further, the number of people living with hunger continued to grow, jumping from 201 million in 1990-1992 to 260 million in 2010-2012.

35. These aggregate figures masked significant differences among regions and countries. The highest proportions of undernourished were found in the African least developed countries, whereas the least developed countries in Asia and the Pacific generally recorded relatively modest undernourishment prevalence rates. The progress achieved in the least developed countries in Asia was attributed to productivity-led growth in agriculture. By contrast, the relatively poor performance of the African least developed countries was in part due to low agricultural productivity, reflecting the low capitalization of the sector.

36. Rapid population growth put additional pressure on the natural resource bases of the least developed countries, including land and water, and undermined agricultural productivity. Progress in reducing the prevalence of undernourishment was slow in countries that were hit by natural and human-induced disasters, especially civil strife, and by the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Trade

37. Total exports of goods and services by the least developed countries reached $229.8 billion in 2011, representing a 23.9 per cent increase over the 2010 level. As

a result, their share in total world exports increased slightly to 1.19 per cent in 2011, up from 1.12 per cent in 2010. Total trade flows were not uniformly distributed with eight countries (Angola, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Equatorial Guinea, Myanmar, Sudan and Zambia) accounting for 87 per cent of the combined total exports of the least developed countries. Changes in destination of exports, which began during the past decade, were sustained. The largest market for the exports of the least developed countries was no longer developed countries but developing countries, the share of which jumped from 40 per cent in 2000 to 52 per cent in 2011.

38. The growing trade ties of the least developed countries with emerging countries were also facilitated by improved market access opportunities. China, India, the Republic of Korea and Taiwan Province of China recently notified WTO as regards their least developed country-dedicated trade preferential agreements. Limited available information indicates that nearly two thirds of the exports of the least developed countries benefited from duty-free access treatment in these countries in 2010.[5] The exports of the least developed countries to developing economies expanded more than sevenfold, to represent 52 per cent of their total exports in 2011 — up from 40 per cent in 2000. On the other hand, about 80 per cent of the least developed countries (excluding the oil-exporting countries) were subject to duty-free treatment in developed countries in 2010, which is unchanged since 2004. All in all, the timely implementation of duty-free and quota-free market access, on a lasting basis for all of the least developed countries, is yet to be achieved. Further, administrative hurdles and restrictive rules of origin, compounded by supply constraints and deficits in trade-related infrastructure deficits in the least developed countries, impede the utilization of preferential trade schemes.

Commodities

39. In most of the least developed countries, the share of extractive industries rose while that of manufacturing either decreased in importance or stagnated, with a few exceptions. The United Republic of Tanzania and Ethiopia were two such exceptions; both underwent important structural changes, with their share of agriculture decreasing to the benefit of manufacturing, services and mining. As noted above, the average share of primary commodities exports across the least developed countries rose significantly, in part due to continued high prices. After a robust pick up in 2011, prices seem to have abated recently but remained relatively strong. Changes in product concentration played a key role in changes in the geographical destination of least developed country exports.

40. The above shifts in the composition and destination of trade flows have conflicting effects on the economic vulnerability of the least developed countries. The concentration of production and exports in sectors with limited technology and productivity and with quality spillovers, limits the ability of countries to sustain high-level economic growth over a long period of time. A narrow productive base is also an indication of limited dynamic shifts of resources, labour and capital, from low-productivity to high-productivity sectors and activities, hence the failure to raise economy-wide productivity and create decent jobs. Furthermore, an inability to achieve adequate economic and trade diversification implies continued dependence on sectors with highly erratic and correlated prices. The consequence of this is continued exposure to external shocks and greater economic instability.

[5] The most recent year for which this information is available.

41. The growing prominence of emerging countries as major trading partners of the least developed countries bodes well for efforts to reduce economic volatility. Greater geographical diversification of trade reduces the likelihood of the least developed countries being affected by a shock coming from a single trading partner, therefore bringing about greater resilience in these countries. Furthermore, their exports to emerging markets tend to be more concentrated in commodities.

Human and social development

Education and training

42. Following a decade-long strong performance, gross intake in primary education continued to increase in many of the least developed countries, albeit at a modest pace. Irrespective of their success in increasing school entry rates, many countries persistently displayed low retention and completion rates. The combination of poorly trained teachers and crowded classrooms impaired learning outcomes. A major challenge is to enrol prospective students at the right age and ensure that they smoothly complete the primary education cycle.

43. Relative to primary education, the pace of enrolments in secondary and vocational education, which are vital for the development of skills required for productive and decent employment, remained modest. In most of the least developed countries, poor outcomes in primary education inhibited improved enrolment and completion rates in secondary and vocational education. Moreover, the quality of education and access to education by marginalized groups continued to remain a major issue.

44. While tertiary enrolment rates continued to rise, the quality of such education seems to have deteriorated, partly because new entrants are often insufficiently equipped for higher education. Other factors included inadequate laboratories and library facilities and very limited use of information and communications technologies.

Population and primary health

45. After years of steady decline, the average child mortality rate across the least developed countries in 2011 was two thirds of its 2001 level but still alarmingly high by international standards: 89 in 1,000 children in the least developed countries died before reaching 5 years of age. The highest child mortality rates were recorded in the countries emerging from or in conflict. Poor health services, diseases such as pneumonia, diarrhoea and malaria, and persistent child malnutrition and hunger constituted the main causes of death among children under 5 years of age in most of these countries.

46. The least developed countries in the Pacific, in particular Solomon Islands, Samoa and Tuvalu, continued to fare better, posting the lowest rates even by the standards of other developing countries. Their success was due to good or improved primary health care, improved education, particularly of mothers, increased child protection, better nutrition for children and mothers, and improved reproductive health. Strong global and domestic commitments supported this progress.

47. Maternal mortality rates in the least developed countries remained the highest in the world, with 398 deaths per 100,000 births in 2010 (compared to 240 for developing countries on average), despite the gains made in recent years. Part of this

progress has been driven by better health care, improvement in physical accessibility to health centres and improved female education. One dimension of improved health care is the modest increase in access to reproductive health.

48. On average, HIV prevalence rates in the least developed countries seemed to have reached a plateau in recent years. The introduction of antiretroviral therapy helped to reduce the number of AIDS-related deaths. The incidence of malaria and tuberculosis decreased in most countries; the challenge now is to build on the achievements made so far.

Youth development

49. Progress in expanding the educational opportunities available to youth has been noteworthy. Literacy rates among young people aged 15 to 25 years in the least developed countries grew to 76.45 per cent in 2009/2010, up from 69.45 per cent during the period 2000-2002. However, this major achievement came with some caveats. A good number of young literates were children who dropped out of school with a mere primary education. The quality of secondary, technical, and vocational and tertiary education and its alignment to labour market demand remained a source of concern. Another dimension of the employability of young people, even if they acquired the right education and training, was continued learning and upgrading of skills.

Water and sanitation

50. Progress in expanding access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation has slowed down moderately over the past five years, leaving a significant proportion of people in the least developed countries without these basic necessities. The proportion of the population using improved drinking water sources hovered around 64 per cent,[6] while the proportion with improved sanitation facilities was merely 34 per cent. Significant disparities also existed within countries, particularly between urban and rural areas and among various socioeconomic groups.

Shelter

51. Rapid urbanization in the least developed countries has been accompanied by a growing demand for affordable urban land and housing that far outpaces supply, resulting in the expansion of unplanned or informal settlements and slums. The growth of these settlements did not proceed with a commensurate expansion in infrastructure and services. Problems related to shelter were not confined to urban areas. Rural areas were the most challenged in regard to the provision of adequate shelter.

Gender equality and empowerment of women

52. Most of the least developed countries made some progress in regard to gender equality and women's empowerment. The rate of change varied across sectors, with representation in parliaments demonstrating significant strides. On average, the percentage of parliamentary seats held by women almost doubled during the period from 2001 to 2012.

[6] The most recent year for which information is available is 2010.

53. Thanks to national and global efforts, primary school attendance and achievement improved for girls. There was also some progress made in secondary and tertiary education, although gender disparities at these levels tended to be larger than those for primary education. The literacy rate of young women increased faster (from 58 per cent in 2000 to 68 per cent in 2010) than for young men. However, women's participation in tertiary education is often confined to specialized fields with limited demand, thus reducing the prospects of equal job opportunities with men. While barriers to the employment of women in the formal economy continue to be strong, women turn to the informal sector more than men, therefore relying on low-productivity jobs.

Social protection

54. Social protection schemes in the least developed countries are aimed at mitigating the impact of various shocks on the well-being of particular households, including such vulnerable groups as people living with physical or mental disabilities, orphans, widows and the elderly. Most of these schemes targeted specific outcomes in such areas as education, health, food security, employment and poverty reduction. Preliminary evidence suggests that some of these schemes have had demonstrable and positive effects on education, health and poverty reduction. Most of them are small-scale pilot projects and their affordability and financial sustainability remain in doubt. Further, little is known about their scalability.

Multiple crises and other emerging challenges

Economic shocks

55. A number of the least developed countries withstood the effects of recent food, fuel, economic and financial crises relatively well compared with previous similar crisis episodes, thanks in part to the domestic policy buffers that were built during the period preceding these crises but also to global responses. Many of the least developed countries, particularly those that are commodity producers, managed the recent commodity price boom relatively well, setting aside a significant share of their windfalls, avoiding real exchange-rate appreciation and limiting domestic credit expansion. They therefore entered the crises from a position of strength which helped them impart a counter-cyclical stance to their fiscal, monetary and exchange rate policies.

56. As recovery took hold, some of the least developed countries began rebuilding domestic shock absorbers, albeit with varying degrees of success. This momentum was, however, brought to a halt and, in some cases, undone as the sovereign debt crisis heightened in Europe and global growth receded. These developments resulted in limited fiscal space and declining foreign reserves, therefore further exposing the least developed countries to exogenous shocks. Also worrisome is the prospect of external financing drying up, which implies that global responses will be limited. Further, even when adequately funded, current global financing instruments, to which the least developed countries have access, present a number of shortcomings, including the sustainability of the schemes and the inflexible conditions of access.

Climate change and environmental sustainability

57. The least developed countries, because of their location in the tropics, are likely to face increases in temperatures beyond the levels that human and natural

ecosystems have been able to withstand to date. Extreme temperatures and their unpredictable variability are likely to negatively affect, among others, agriculture output, ecosystems and health conditions, thereby undermining efforts to reduce poverty. Rising sea levels and coastal erosion, salinization and depletion of aquifers, ocean acidification, desertification, land degradation and melting of glaciers have disproportionately affected the least developed countries because of their lack of capacity for adaptation. The magnitude of the damage is much higher when indirect effects, such as those on valued-added chains and supply networks, are accounted for.

58. Addressing the challenges of climate change and environmental sustainability provides an opportunity for the least developed countries to move away from static growth engines and enter the path of green growth and sustainable development. The ongoing process of formulating the sustainable development goals offers a unique opportunity to focus on the problems facing the least developed countries in relation to environment and climate change. In the open-ended working group on the sustainable development goals, the group of least developed countries has advanced the principle of differential and preferential treatment.

Disaster risk reduction

59. The group of least developed countries is not only the most exposed to disasters but the least equipped to deal with them. All six countries with the highest rankings in the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction risk reduction index for 2010/11 were least developed. Climate change is expected to further increase the vulnerability of the least developed countries. A number of initiatives at the regional, subregional and national levels have been launched in response to these challenges, including the formulation of disaster risk reduction policies and strategies and the establishment of disaster management institutions. Efforts should focus on closing the funding and institutional gaps of existing disaster management institutions, improving information management, expanding mechanisms to deal with risks and communication on disasters, and integrating disaster risk reduction into development planning processes.

Mobilizing financial resources for development and capacity-building

Domestic resource mobilization

60. Average gross domestic savings in the least developed countries increased from 18.3 per cent in 2010 to 19.7 per cent in 2011. Low levels of per capita income, as well as the demographics and peculiar features of their financial systems, were some of the driving forces behind low private savings rate in most of the least developed countries. A large chunk of domestic savings comes from public savings, which in turn depend on the ability to collect revenues.

61. Government revenues trended upwards, increasing from an average of 11.7 per cent during the period 2001-2009 to 14.9 per cent in 2010. Supporting this trend was the good performance of the resource-rich least developed countries benefiting from revenues from natural resource extraction. In some cases, however, revenues derived from other forms of taxation, including excise taxes, corporate income taxes on other industries, trade taxes and value-added taxes, stagnated or increased marginally. Such an increasingly unbalanced tax mix together with a small formal sector accounted for disproportionately in the tax base contributed to further narrowing the tax sources in most least developed countries.

62. Other factors eroding the tax base across the least developed countries included the proliferation of tax preferences and transfer pricing practices by multinational enterprises. Limited resources and capacity in tax administration constrained the ability of these countries to rein in potential revenue losses.

Official development assistance

63. The volume of ODA flows channelled to the least developed countries in 2011 totalled $44.6 billion, up slightly from the $43.8 billion received in 2010. ODA as a percentage of the gross national income (GNI) of donors fell to 0.10 per cent in 2011, down from the record 0.11 per cent posted in 2010. Of the 23 States members of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), only 10 met the low-end ODA target of 0.15 per cent reaffirmed in the Istanbul Programme of Action.

64. Preliminary OECD estimates for 2012 suggest that bilateral net ODA to the least developed countries dropped by 12.8 per cent compared with the 2011 level. This decline was more severe than that of the total bilateral ODA granted to all countries, which fell by 4 per cent. Cuts in aid budgets, which occurred against the backdrop of the sovereign debt crisis in Europe, seem to have unevenly affected the least developed countries. Furthermore, looking to the future, ODA prospects are uncertain.

65. Even under the Aid for Trade Initiative, a decreased level of resources was mobilized. According to OECD, Aid for Trade commitments reached $41.5 billion in 2011, down from a record $48 billion in 2010. The least developed countries received only 32 per cent of the total, or $13.4 billion. Afghanistan, Bangladesh and the Democratic Republic of the Congo were among the top recipients.

66. Progress in improving the quality of aid was mixed. On the one hand, the grant element of ODA provided to the least developed countries in 2009-2010 stood at 99.4 per cent.[7] The aid allocation of some multilateral organizations, in particular the World Bank, is increasingly shifting towards productive capacity-building. Also, important strides have been made towards improving the public financial management systems of recipients and ensuring that donors use those systems. On the other hand, 80 per cent of the bilateral ODA channelled to the least developed countries was untied. Still, 20 per cent of ODA continued to be subject to requirements regarding the acquisition of goods and services from suppliers in donor countries. Furthermore, aid to the least developed countries continued to be fragmented and predictability has not improved.

External debt

67. The average ratios of debt stock to GNI and of total debt service to exports of goods, services and income declined slightly in 2011 compared with 2010 levels. Debt relief, provided in the context of the enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative and the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI),[8] and strong export earnings contributed to this positive development.

---

[7] United Nations, *The Global Partnership for Development: Making Rhetoric a Reality; MDG Gap Task Force Report 2012* (New York, September 2012).

[8] See www.imf.org/external/np/exr/facts/hipc.htm and www.imf.org/external/np/exr/facts/mdri.htm.

68. Being granted debt cancellation under the HIPC Initiative does not always eliminate the prospect of debt distress. Of the nine least developed countries that were at a high risk of debt distress as of February 2013, six had already received debt relief through the enhanced HIPC Initiative and MDRI.[9]

69. Many of the least developed countries are increasingly relying on non-concessional lending to finance the development of infrastructure. Given a sober outlook for overall bilateral aid, such non-concessional lending might lead to rising obligations in the near future. These countries may therefore be confronted with debt sustainability problems.[10] Addressing these new challenges and the shortcoming in existing debt relief initiatives requires innovative mechanisms that raise the contingent aspect of debt claims and align the debt-service burden with the repayment capacity of the least developed countries and their economic cycles.

Foreign direct investment

70. Inflows of FDI to the least developed countries fell to $15 billion in 2011, maintaining the downward trend that began three years earlier. Much of the fall was attributable to negative FDI inflows to Angola and Yemen, which were linked to the oil-investment cycle.

71. In general, FDI flows to the least developed countries continued to be geographically and sectorally concentrated. The African least developed countries, which constitute the bulk of the group's commodity-producing countries, accounted for a large share of these flows. A significant share of FDI was concentrated in extractive sectors. As a result, FDI flows did not fully generate spillover effects in the form of employment, technology and know-how in the rest of the economy.

Remittances

72. Remittance flows to the least developed countries reached $30 billion in 2011, representing an 11 per cent increase over the 2010 level; this increase was geographically broad-based.

73. One of the challenges that migrants are confronted with are transaction costs. Sending remittances to the least developed countries continued to be costly, and in some could reach 12 per cent of the total amount transferred. Leveraging the developmental potential of remittances is another challenge. These flows are geared predominantly towards consumption rather than investment. Efforts have been deployed to address this and to scale up the contribution of remittance flows to capital formation. The success of these initiatives has been muted, however.

Good governance at all levels

74. A commitment to good governance was strong across the least developed countries. A growing number of them continued to adhere to international legal instruments of direct relevance and application to various dimensions of good governance. As of April 2013, 40 of the least developed countries had accepted,

[9] Afghanistan, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Gambia, Haiti and Sao Tome and Principe.

[10] Some of the investments in infrastructure bear fruit only in the medium and long run, hence a potential maturity mismatch. Countries may therefore have to face the reality of a debt-service burden that exceeds the capacity to pay.

signed or ratified the United Nations Convention against Corruption. The majority of the African least developed countries participate in the African Peer Review Mechanism, the objective of which is to encourage integrity and transparency in political and economic governance.

75. Many of the least developed countries embarked on a process of reforming their institutional and policy frameworks, resulting in moderate improvements in governance practices. The participation of various stakeholders in the political process increased, most notably the continued rise in the number of female elected officials.

76. Public spending effectiveness and budget transparency improved in some countries thanks to reforms that were initiated in such areas as budget governance, revenue governance, internal control, public procurement, and external audit and oversight. These reforms were, however, far from being fully implemented in most of the least developed countries owing in particular to weak capacities at all stages of the reform process, from formulation to implementation and monitoring.

77. On global governance, not much was achieved in the past two years with regard to increasing the voice and participation of the least developed countries in relevant international forums. Ongoing efforts to rebalance voice and representation in the International Monetary Fund (IMF), even if realized, would not dramatically change the weight of the least developed countries in the Fund's governance structure, as their quota would remain marginal and disproportionate to their demographic size and the volume of IMF operations favouring them.

IV. Engagement of stakeholders in the monitoring and implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action

Biennial regional reviews of the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action

78. In close collaboration with the Office of the High Representative, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) have carried forward their mandate to organize biennial reviews of the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action in their respective regions.

79. The Asia-Pacific regional review meeting was held in Siem Reap, Cambodia, in December 2012.[11] The Siem Reap outcome document underscored the importance of productive capacity-building for achieving economic transformation and for enabling the least developed countries in Asia and the Pacific to graduate from their least developed status. In order to benefit from the region's dynamism and produce new and more value-added goods and services, the least developed countries in Asia and the Pacific agreed to pursue strategic diversification policies, covering: (a) expansion of educational opportunities; (b) adequate and appropriate infrastructure, including access to reliable electricity supply, efficient transport links and modern telecommunications services; (c) value chain development; (d) simplification and harmonization of transit border procedures; and (e) better access to finance. More comprehensive support from the international community was also called for to sustain the progress made so far. The Siem Reap outcome

[11] For a summary of key outcomes of the regional meeting, see E/ESCAP/69/2.

document was adopted by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific at its sixty-ninth session, held in Bangkok in April 2013.

80. The Africa regional review was convened in the context of the sixth annual joint meetings of the ECA Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and African Union Conference of Ministers of Economy and Finance, held in Abidjan in March 2013. The Committee of Experts of the Conference noted that, despite an impressive growth record and improvements in social indicators, the sustainability of such changes remained questionable given the increased unemployment in and persistent vulnerability of the African least developed countries. The global economic slowdown, coupled with climate change, posed grave downside risks for these countries. Their performance continued to be driven by a narrow range of primary commodities that were subject to high price volatility and whose benefits accrued to small segments of society. The Committee called on development partners to support the African least developed countries in their efforts to develop a more diversified production and export base that would increase resilience, and in their efforts to promote inclusiveness and access to basic social services. The Committee also called for the institutionalization of the biennial regional review.

Efforts by member States to mainstream the Istanbul Programme of Action into relevant strategic frameworks[12]

81. Mainstreaming the provisions of the Istanbul Programme of Action into the relevant planning documents of the least developed countries, of their development partners and of international institutions constitutes one of the founding principles of the Programme of Action. Many of the least developed countries have already aligned their national planning documents with the Istanbul Programme of Action.

82. In Zambia, the provisions of the Programme of Action were integrated into the sixth national development plan (2011-2015). The accelerated growth and sustainable development plan (2011-2015) of Burkina Faso aims to achieve the objectives in the eight priority areas of the Istanbul Programme of Action. The Agenda for Transformation, Liberia's medium-term national development plan for the period 2012-2017, was similarly aligned. The Agenda feeds into the Liberia Rising Vision 2030 project, and while the latter sets the broad aspiration for the country to graduate from least developed country status, the Agenda defines the initial steps to be taken towards achieving it. The Gambia also featured some priorities of the Istanbul Programme of Action in its Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment, 2012-2015, which seeks to further enhance the productive base of the Gambia so as to unlock the country's growth potential.

83. Aligning national planning documents with the Istanbul Programme of Action is only a starting point, with the main challenge being its implementation, monitoring and follow-up. Bhutan has taken firm steps in this direction. Upon aligning the national strategic framework with the Programme of Action, a focal point was appointed in each ministry. Malawi developed an implementation plan which outlines all of the activities to be carried out. Bhutan, Cambodia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic included clear timelines for graduation in their

[12] The narrative is informed by a workshop of national focal points of the least developed countries, convened by the Office of the High Representative in October 2012.

national development plans. Nepal has integrated the implementation of the Programme of Action into its United Nations Development Assistance Framework and is working towards integrating it into its national development plan as well.

84. The countries which have mainstreamed the Programme of Action into their national planning have faced some challenges in its early implementation, including: (a) limited increases in public expenditure owing to macroeconomic stability concerns; (b) misalignment between allocations in the budget or medium-term expenditure frameworks on the one hand, and the priorities set in the Istanbul Programme of Action and in national development plans and strategies on the other; and (c) volatile and unpredictable support from development partners. Recent developments in ODA are likely to make it harder for the least developed countries to adequately address the priorities of the Programme of Action.

85. Development cooperation strategies and policies of various development partners have also taken into account the Istanbul Programme of Action and the concerns of the least developed countries. It is recalled that the Council of the European Union recognized that the growing diversity of developing countries called for greater differentiation in the design of its trade, investment and development policies in order to sharpen the focus on the least developed countries and those countries most in need. In addition, it restated its commitment to continue work to deliver more focused, targeted and coordinated Aid for Trade.[13]

86. Many traditional donors deployed efforts to streamline their development aid strategies and provide more focused, less fragmented and more effective aid to fewer countries. Countries such as Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Finland and Sweden took important steps towards delivering streamlined aid to the least developed countries.

87. Since May 2012, three of the least developed countries, namely, Vanuatu, Samoa and the Lao People's Democratic Republic, have become full members of WTO. The membership of WTO is also working towards revising the work programme of its subcommittee on the least developed countries so as to mainstream the trade-related elements of the Istanbul Programme of Action. To that effect, the least developed countries proposed specific references to the Programme of Action in the updated version of the work programme. On 25 July 2012, the WTO General Council adopted a decision to strengthen, streamline and operationalize the 2002 guidelines on the accession of the least developed countries. This was done by providing specific flexibilities to help them integrate into the multilateral trading system at a pace and in a manner consistent with their development, trade and financial needs.

Support by the organizations of the United Nations system and regional and international organizations for least developed country priorities[14]

88. United Nations coordination mechanisms, such as the High-level Committee on Programmes of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), took up the issue of the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action with a view to ensuring coordination and monitoring on a

[13] 3154th Foreign Affairs (Trade) Council meeting, 16 March 2012.

[14] The narrative is based on inputs submitted by the United Nations system, and regional and international organizations.

system-wide basis. In implementing the mandate emanating from General Assembly resolution 67/220 on the follow-up to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, CEB is in the process of including the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action as a standing item on its agenda.

89. Sixteen United Nations entities took decisions to mainstream the Istanbul Programme of Action and integrate its provisions into their work programmes. Mirroring this commitment, many agencies also allocated 50 per cent or more of their budget to the least developed countries.

90. The Office of the High Representative has continued to fulfil its functions of assisting the Secretary-General in providing effective follow-up and monitoring of the Istanbul Programme of Action and mobilizing international support and resources for its effective implementation. The Office is also tasked with the full mobilization and coordination of the organizations of the United Nations system with a view to facilitating the coherent and coordinated implementation of the Programme of Action at the country, regional and global levels.

91. The inter-agency consultative group led by the Office of the High Representative provides a platform to build synergies among the entities of the United Nations system and other international organizations, and to enhance the scope and effectiveness of the support provided by these organizations to the least developed countries. At its meeting in October 2012, the consultative group agreed to move ahead with planned activities in the context of four working groups, each spearheaded by the relevant agencies. The working groups will focus on the following major priority areas: (a) resource mobilization; (b) crisis mitigation and resilience-building; (c) agriculture, food security, nutrition and rural development; and (d) human and social development.

92. The Office of the High Representative continued its advocacy work to raise international awareness of the special development challenges confronted by the least developed countries and to place them high on the global development cooperation agenda. The High Representative especially focused his advocacy efforts on reflecting the needs and priorities of the least developed countries in the post-2015 development agenda and in relation to the sustainable development goals. These efforts were backed by analytical work, which included a joint gap and capacity analysis aimed at the establishment of a technology bank and science, technology and innovation supporting mechanism dedicated to the least developed countries.

93. In October 2012, the High Representative was appointed a commissioner on the Broadband Commission for Digital Development, an initiative of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) aimed at boosting the importance of broadband in the international policy agenda and accelerating the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

94. The High Representative also joined the multi-stakeholder advisory board, co-chaired by the Secretary-General and the President of the World Bank, which provides strategic guidance to the Secretary-General's Sustainable Energy for All initiative. This initiative highlights the need for developing countries to create conditions that enable growth by establishing national targets, policies and regulations. Most of the least developed countries have opted to be part of the work

stream focused on country action and therefore benefit from support provided by partners of the initiative, for example, in the development and implementation of policies, programmes and projects and in regard to advocacy and resource mobilization.

95. The High Representative and the Chair of the United Nations Development Group sent a joint letter to all resident coordinators, requesting them to support the Governments of the least developed countries in the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action.

96. In the context of the Third Development Cooperation Forum convened by the Economic and Social Council in July 2012, the Office of the High Representative collaborated with the Government of Turkey on an event that focused on monitoring the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action as a way of strengthening mutual accountability in the least developed countries. A second event, organized jointly with the Governments of Finland and Zambia in follow-up to the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, discussed how the international community could support the efforts of the least developed countries towards building a green economy.

97. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat launched a revamped information online portal dedicated to providing information on international support specific to the least developed countries and on smooth transition measures.

98. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) continued to assist the least developed countries through its dedicated research and policy analysis, advisory services, technical cooperation and capacity-building activities. It carried out, inter alia, a project assessing the impact of challenges arising from volatility of commodity prices and the global economic, financial and food crises on the prospects of the least developed countries. The Least Developed Countries Report 2012[15] focused on the role of remittances in support of the inclusive and sustainable development of the least developed countries.

99. Activities undertaken by ECA in support of the least developed countries in its region include: mainstreaming the Africa Mining Vision 2050 into the national development strategies of African countries; focusing on policy areas with the greatest impact on graduation; ensuring that preferential rules of origin applicable to imports from the least developed countries are simple, transparent, predictable and contribute to facilitating market access; and building the capacity of national statistical offices to monitor the Istanbul Programme of Action.

100. ESCAP carried out capacity development activities to support the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action, including advocacy training workshops for the least developed countries on achieving the Millennium Development Goals, held in Kathmandu from 18 to 20 April 2012 and in Siem Reap, Cambodia, from 25 to 28 October 2011. The workshops aimed to support the policymakers, civil society, media, academia and development partners of the least developed countries in the Asia-Pacific region in developing and implementing national development strategies based on the Millennium Development Goals.

[15] UNCTAD, *The Least Developed Countries Report 2012: Harnessing Remittances and Diaspora Knowledge to Build Productive Capacities* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.12.II.D and corrigenda).

101. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) supported Haiti through the project on experiences in social innovation, by transferring knowledge and adopting concrete approaches to addressing issues related to environmental protection, maternal health, violence in schools, domestic violence, productive development in rural areas and microfinancing.

102. Through its cooperation programme, WIPO continued to focus on building the capacity of the least developed countries to innovate and create. This included provision of support in the preparation of national intellectual property policy and innovation strategies, technical skills development, strategic use of intellectual property tools for economic competitiveness, and facilitating access to and use of global scientific knowledge databases.

103. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) collaborated with the African Union Commission to establish a comprehensive business plan for the African pharmaceutical industry, aimed at the independent production of medicines in the African least developed countries. The UNIDO project on innovation, development and entrepreneurship for all is centred on youth-led innovation enterprises and the creation of clusters and networks in growth potential sectors in the least developed countries.

104. ITU developed strategies to support the least developed countries in maximizing the selection and use of appropriate new technologies, such as broadband, digital broadcasting and next generation networks. It also continued to implement actions to help these countries to reduce the digital gap, create and maintain an enabling information and communications technology policy and regulatory environment, and build the required human and institutional capacity.

105. The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) focused on labour-based infrastructure operations, and helped to restart local economies, provide livelihoods and develop skills among local labourers.

106. The assistance provided by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to the least developed countries is concentrated on developing national technical, managerial and institutional capacities in nuclear science and technology, with applications in the areas of food and agriculture, human health, water and environment, and sustainable energy planning.

107. The least developed countries have received focused attention as part of the initiative launched by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) together with the Governments of Ethiopia, India and the United States of America to mobilize the world to end preventable child deaths in the context of the goals of the global movement, "Committing to child survival: a promise renewed".

108. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) continued to support the least developed countries in population situation analysis, assessment of the nexus between population dynamics and development challenges, the development and implementation of censuses and the analysis of census data, and strengthening of national capacity to incorporate population issues into relevant national public policies, plans and expenditure frameworks in 42 of the least developed countries in 2011/2012.

109. The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) applied a strategic investment approach, including a suite of tools to help the least developed

countries match their decision-making with available evidence on modes of transmission and considerations of cost-effectiveness. Interventions under the global plan for the elimination of new HIV infections among children and keeping their mothers alive have resulted in commendable progress being made in curbing the epidemic in some of the least developed countries.

110. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) engaged in a wide range of activities in the least developed countries with a view to securing improved food security and better nutrition, along with increased and more effective public and private investment in agriculture and rural development. Key priority areas include sustainable intensification of crop and livestock production, and sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and natural resources.

111. Reducing rural poverty is at the core of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) interventions in the least developed countries. IFAD has an ongoing portfolio of 124 projects that focus on small-scale agriculture as a crucial source of income and nutrition for many poor rural households and a driver of rural economic growth.

112. In collaboration with IFAD, the World Bank has been implementing the "Send money home to Asia" project, which includes country profiles and innovative cases of remittance services in the Asian least developed countries. The World Bank also created a database on remittance prices, "Send money Africa", which allows migrants to compare the costs of remittances from 16 sending countries to 28 receiving countries, thereby enhancing transparency in the market and providing migrants with reliable data on the cost of transferring money.

113. In the area of trade, WTO continued to support its least developed member States, in particular through its biennial technical assistance plans, the Standards and Trade Development Facility, and the Enhanced Integrated Framework. The latter is an Aid for Trade partnership that supports the least developed countries in their efforts to integrate trade into their development strategies and be more active players in the global trading system. Following an independent evaluation, the Enhanced Integrated Framework was extended until the end of 2015, with an additional operational period for project implementation extending to 2017.

114. The International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO (ITC) provided technical cooperation to the least developed countries to enable small business export success. It provided trade-related information through web portals, thereby helping least developed country exporters to make informed decisions. ITC also trained trade experts from the least developed countries. Through its Women and Trade programme, ITC promoted gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

115. Several organizations continued to provide support to the least developed countries in regard to multiple crises and other emerging challenges. To help low-income countries, many of which are among the least developed, to withstand the effects of economic shocks, IMF continued to make available, under the umbrella of the Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust, three concessional lending instruments, namely, the Extended Credit Facility, the Standby Credit Facility and the Rapid Credit Facility, which range from short-term and emergency financing to medium-term balance-of-payment support.

116. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) concentrated its support on enhancing the capacity of the least developed countries to incorporate climate

change responses into national development processes. Its activities are aimed at assisting the least developed countries in adapting to climate change by mitigating its effects, reducing emissions from deforestation, and increasing knowledge and communication on climate change.

117. The Strategic Initiative to Address Climate Change in the least developed countries, a major instrument of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), continued to support such countries in addressing their climate change challenges. UNDP also provided assistance in the formulation and implementation of green low-emission climate-resilient development strategies which allow the least developed countries to respond more effectively to opportunities emerging in the climate finance landscape. UNDP worked in partnership with FAO and UNEP to support the least developed countries through the United Nations collaborative initiative on reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation. UNDP assistance to the least developed countries in the area of good governance included support in the establishment of effective and fair electoral, justice and security institutions and processes.

118. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) contributed to advancing the United Nations Convention against Corruption in the least developed countries through the assessment of national anti-corruption legislation and practices. Bangladesh, Sao Tome and Principe and Uganda completed the country review stage as part of the implementation review mechanism of the Convention.

Engagement of other stakeholders in the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action

119. The Istanbul Programme of Action recognizes that civil society complements the role of government and the private sector in monitoring its implementation. A forum of non-governmental organizations on the implementation of the Programme of Action was organized by the Office of the High Representative in close cooperation with the global alliance of civil society organizations, LDC Watch, in Kathmandu in May 2013.

120. Academia remains involved as well. LDC IV Monitor,[16] a group of think tanks and academic institutions from the least developed countries and partner countries, undertook policy-oriented research on the implementation of the priority areas of action of the Programme of Action and organized events to help maintain and increase the interest of policymakers, practitioners and the public in the outcome of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries.

121. Several private sector initiatives were initiated at the Conference. A special event, planned for September 2013, will follow up on these efforts. In addition, ITC and WIPO organized a number of private sector development events which focused on the least developed countries; during these events, further capacity-building and trade-related support was extended to these countries.

122. Parliamentary engagement has been recognized as one means for ensuring effectiveness, transparency and accountability in the follow-up to the Conference and in monitoring the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action. The Office of the High Representative, in cooperation with the Inter-Parliamentary

[16] See www.ldc4monitor.org.

Union (IPU), is planning the convening of a workshop during meetings of the IPU Assembly in October 2013. The purpose of the event is to strengthen the capacity of parliamentarians to effectively monitor the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action, provide an opportunity to share experiences and good practices and foster cooperation among parliamentarians from the least developed countries.

V. Progress on graduation and smooth transition

123. The General Assembly, by resolution 66/213, requested the President of the General Assembly to establish an ad hoc working group to further study and strengthen the smooth transition process for the countries graduating from the least developed country category. The ad hoc working group, which was jointly chaired by Belgium and Malawi, held four informal sessions between 16 January and 6 June 2012. Member States, several United Nations organizations and a number of experts contributed to its work. The report of the working group, containing recommendations on strengthening the smooth transition process as well as the smooth transition measures, was submitted to the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session (A/67/92).

124. Following its consideration of the report, the General Assembly adopted resolution 67/221, in which it emphasized the need for an orderly and gradual transition from least developed country status based on the national smooth transition strategy and supported by international measures. The Assembly recognized that the graduation process of the least developed countries should include the consideration of appropriate incentives and support measures.

125. In the same resolution, the General Assembly recommended that the consultative mechanism specified in its resolution 59/209 be established by the graduating country, in cooperation with its bilateral and multilateral development and trading partners and, upon request, be provided the support of the Resident Coordinator as a facilitator of the consultative process and to assist graduating countries in the preparation of their transition strategies. Further, the Assembly invited development partners to consider least developed country indicators, per capita GNI, the human assets index and the economic vulnerability index as part of their criteria for allocating official development assistance.

126. In December 2012, the General Assembly, in resolution 67/136, endorsed the recommendation of the Economic and Social Council that South Sudan be added to the list of the least developed countries.

127. Samoa, which is expected to graduate at the beginning of 2014, has made some progress in its preparations of its transition strategy, including the collection of information on least developed country-specific support measures. The Government held consultations with development partners concerning the continuation of support programmes. It is expected that the large majority of important donors, including multilateral agencies, will continue their support for Samoa. A development policy matrix that guides the engagement with development partners has been introduced, and Samoa was designated a "Delivering as one" country by UNDP in 2013, which should enhance collaboration among United Nations entities in the field.

128. Cambodia has announced that it is committed to graduating from least developed country status before 2020. In this respect, it is planning to set up a

working group involving all key government ministries and institutions for the implementation of projects and programmes to accelerate graduation.

129. The Lao People's Democratic Republic has also announced that it is striving to reach graduation, as reflected in its 2020 strategy established in 2000. This strategy is being revised to enable the long-term vision to be reflected in the next development plan. The sectoral working groups and round-table meetings will be important forums for discussion and action around the least developed country strategy. Developing a graduation strategy implies that all key elements for achieving structural progress, especially the development of sound productive capacities, are mainstreamed into the planning process.

130. The Governments of Nepal and Myanmar are also working towards graduation from the least developed country category by, inter alia, developing a graduation strategy with the support of their development partners.

VI. Conclusions and recommendations

131. Two years into the process of implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action, the least developed countries have made some progress towards achieving many of the goals and targets agreed in Istanbul. Structural change also seems to be taking hold in a few of the least developed countries, in particular those that have a sustained high level of GDP growth, helped in large part by increasing investment and rapid urbanization. Yet, as indicated in the present report, most of the least developed countries continue to face pervasive poverty, serious structural impediments to growth, low levels of human development and high exposure to shocks and disasters. More worrisome is that the deteriorating global economic environment is being transmitted to the least developed countries through declining FDI and ODA flows, therefore putting at risk hard-won gains and the ability to expand such gains to all of them.

132. Addressing these new challenges and achieving the goals and targets of the Istanbul Programme of Action will require bold actions to be taken by the least developed countries and their development partners in the Programme's eight priority areas. Both the least developed countries and their development partners have intensified their efforts to mainstream the Programme of Action into their national development and development cooperation strategies, respectively. It is crucial now to focus on the implementation of the Programme of Action, especially with respect to the agreed actions.

133. Although the least developed countries have made some progress in social and human development, many of the goals and targets of the Millennium Development Goals are yet to be achieved. The international community should, therefore, give due priority to the least developed countries in order to accelerate progress in their attainment in the least developed countries by 2015.

134. Specific attention should be given to productive capacity-building, which is essential to growth, structural transformation and creation of decent jobs. Progress in structural transformation will not only reduce the exposure of these countries to shocks but enable them to sustain a growth rate of at least 7 per cent per annum and meet the criteria for graduation by 2020. More domestic investment, as well as ODA and multilateral lending, should therefore be channelled into productive capacity-

building, including infrastructure and energy, in the least developed countries. This will also require capacity-building of the private sector and further policy reforms to promote a multi-stakeholder approach to development.

135. Sustainable agricultural practices need to be adopted so as to increase productivity, address climate change challenges and help achieve food security. With only two years to the target date of the Millennium Development Goals, progress needs to be accelerated in the least developed countries that lag behind. Expanding the access of women and youth to factors of production, such as employability skills, finance and land, should be a key priority. The development of rural infrastructure and storage capacity, the modernization of agriculture and the expansion of availability of credit, finance and extension services should be given due priority.

136. Trade diversification and the reduction of vulnerability to shocks also require expansion of duty-free and quota-free access to markets, including through more simplified and beneficial rules of origin and a reduction in non-tariff barriers, and improvement in the allocation of Aid for Trade and other measures in order to overcome supply-side constraints. The mainstreaming of trade policy into development strategies, improvement of supply-side capacity, trade facilitation and effective duty-free and quota-free market access for the least developed countries need to be pursued in an integrated manner.

137. The establishment of a special technology transfer and technological capacity-building mechanism for the least developed countries is crucial to facilitating their technological leapfrogging, which will contribute to bringing about rapid structural transformation.

138. The recent decline in ODA to the least developed countries should be reversed and important steps taken to live up to the ODA commitments set forth in the Istanbul Programme of Action. More priority should be given to the least developed countries in the allocation of ODA and other resources. Also, the quality and effectiveness of ODA needs to be further improved, especially with respect to using the country systems of the least developed countries and enhancing predictability. As the HIPC and MDRI initiatives come to an end and debt sustainability concerns mount in a number of the least developed countries, innovative responses to these challenges need to be developed. Improving domestic resource mobilization should complement these global efforts to expand the total resources available to the least developed countries. Innovative incentives, including schemes for potential investors in home countries, should be designed so as to attract a greater volume of FDI, with significant spillover effects in the domestic economy.

139. Given the deepening relationships between the least developed countries and emerging economies and the significant potential for further expansion, South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation could be strengthened in all areas of the Istanbul Programme of Action with more institutionalized collaborative effort. Similarly, resources from innovative financing should be made available for the development of the least developed countries.

140. In line with the provisions of the Programme of Action, the regional reviews of its implementation held in Africa and Asia and the Pacific both focused on the importance of building productive capacity, including the integration of the least developed countries in global value chains and their industrialization. These

biannual regional reviews are essential for monitoring the implementation of the Programme of Action and should be strengthened further.

141. The moderate progress made towards achieving the goals and targets of the Istanbul Programme of Action and the growing challenges faced by the least developed countries underline the need to give due priority to these countries. This is not only a moral imperative but also a means to promote a stable and peaceful global order.

142. In particular, this requires that the key priority areas of the Programme of Action be reflected in the post-2015 development agenda. These include: (a) productive capacity-building, including through rapid development of infrastructure and energy; (b) green economy policies to achieve sustained, equitable and inclusive economic growth; (c) structural transformation; (d) food security; (e) poverty eradication; (f) resilience-building; and (g) sufficient policy space to pursue the agenda of structural transformation and productive employment.

143. Since the least developed countries are highly vulnerable and regularly exposed to a variety of natural hazards and shocks, it is important to build appropriate adaptation and resilience capacities to mitigate their effects. The least developed countries also need easy access to resources from the various environment and climate change-related funds and programmes.

144. It is encouraging that several of the least developed countries have announced their intention to reach graduation status by 2020. These countries should start to prepare their transition strategy as early as possible and request specific support. As a precondition for meaningful transition strategies that will prevent graduating countries from sliding back, it is crucial that all development partners provide current information on support measures directed specifically towards the least developed countries and on smooth transition measures, as agreed by the ad hoc working group. These smooth transition measures by development and trading partners should be enhanced in line with General Assembly resolution 67/221. The organizations of the United Nations system should also step up their assistance for graduating countries to support their smooth transition from least developed country status.

Annex

Data

The tables contained in the present annex were largely compiled from official, published international sources by the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States. The published sources are cited with each table. Since national data sources have improved, international estimates were rarely used, except to adjust national data for comparability. Where sources made retrospective adjustments to data, the newer data were incorporated in the tables. As a result, some of the data may differ from those published in previous years.

Where shown, totals and averages for the least developed countries and developing regions are weighted by absolute numbers of population or economic variable used in the denominator.

Explanatory notes for tables

1. Years separated by a hyphen (such as 2001-2010) indicate data based on averages in the period shown, unless otherwise indicated in the notes to the tables. Years separated by a slash (such as 2009/2010) indicate that data are shown for the most recent year available in the period.

2. Figures may not add to totals, owing to rounding.

Statistical tables

Table 1
Economic growth and poverty

	Annual growth rate of gross domestic product (in constant United States dollars) (percentage)				*Percentage of population below international poverty line*
	2001-2010	*2011*	*2012 (estimate)*	*2013 (projected)*	*2001/2011*
Africa					
Angola	12.09	3.87	7.51	7.71	54.3
Benin	3.65	3.08	3.40	4.60	47.3
Burkina Faso	5.80	5.08	6.00	6.20	44.6
Burundi	4.53	4.20	4.38	4.82	81.3
Central African Republic	1.25	3.30	3.80	4.00	61.8
Chad	8.87	3.60	6.20	4.00	61.9
Comoros	1.90	2.23	2.46	3.52	46.1
Democratic Republic of the Congo	5.73	6.92	5.80	5.50	87.7
Djibouti	4.85	4.80	4.67	4.79	18.8
Equatorial Guinea	13.35	7.09	6.31	5.81	–
Eritrea	0.04	8.72	6.50	5.00	–
Ethiopia	8.67	11.18	7.00	7.37	39.0
Gambia	3.88	5.47	-1.00	6.20	33.6
Guinea	2.33	4.20	4.00	4.40	43.3
Guinea-Bissau	2.82	4.30	-0.50	2.61	48.9
Lesotho	3.67	4.20	4.30	5.90	43.4
Liberia	1.95	8.24	8.40	7.50	83.8
Madagascar	2.19	1.62	2.35	3.27	81.3
Malawi	6.14	4.54	7.50	5.94	73.9
Mali	5.00	2.68	1.00	5.20	50.4
Mauritania	5.06	5.10	4.75	6.27	23.4
Mozambique	7.54	7.15	7.50	8.10	59.6
Niger	4.53	2.28	9.10	5.90	43.6
Rwanda	8.10	8.58	7.92	7.57	63.2
Sao Tome and Principe	5.48	4.94	5.00	5.30	28.2
Senegal	3.99	2.78	3.90	4.60	33.5
Sierra Leone	7.87	6.03	26.50	7.41	53.4
Somalia	2.87	2.56	2.60	2.60	39.0
South Sudan	–	-3.91	-55.00	69.60	–
Sudan	–	-3.91	-11.00	1.50	19.8
Togo	2.55	4.87	3.50	4.20	38.7
Uganda	12.11	8.66	4.65	5.47	38.0
United Republic of Tanzania	7.05	6.37	6.82	7.12	67.9

	Annual growth rate of gross domestic product (in constant United States dollars) (percentage)				*Percentage of population below international poverty line*
	2001-2010	*2011*	*2012 (estimate)*	*2013 (projected)*	*2001/2011*
Zambia	5.63	6.60	5.79	6.30	68.5
Average, Africa	**7.63**	**3.99**	**2.21**	**6.64**	**58.5**
Asia and Pacific					
Afghanistan	13.61	5.74	5.20	6.50	–
Bangladesh	5.88	6.66	6.21	6.31	43.3
Bhutan	8.75	5.85	9.90	13.50	10.2
Cambodia	7.98	7.07	6.50	6.70	22.8
Kiribati	1.41	3.00	2.50	2.50	–
Lao People's Democratic Republic	7.31	8.04	8.30	8.00	33.9
Myanmar	12.14	5.46	5.60	6.00	–
Nepal	3.82	3.88	4.00	3.70	24.8
Samoa	2.36	1.37	1.50	1.90	–
Solomon Islands	4.81	10.70	7.40	4.00	–
Timor-Leste	21.97	10.60	10.00	10.00	37.4
Tuvalu	0.29	1.00	1.20	1.30	–
Vanuatu	3.81	4.30	2.60	4.30	–
Yemen	4.97	-10.48	-0.99	5.01	17.5
Average, Asia and Pacific	**6.88**	**3.83**	**5.15**	**6.13**	**33.3**
Haiti	0.22	5.59	4.80	7.00	61.7
Average, all least developed countries	**7.26**	**3.95**	**3.29**	**6.46**	**50.7**

Source: United Nations Statistics Division http://unstats.un.org/unsd/databases.htm) and International Monetary Fund.
Note: Figures for the proportion of population below the poverty line are averages of all available observations between

Table 2
Productive capacity

(a) Value-added share of manufacturing, agriculture and services

(Percentage of gross domestic product)

	Value-added share of manufacturing		*Value-added share of agriculture*		*Value-added share of services*		*Gross capital formation*	
	2001-2010	*2010/2011*	*2001-2010*	*2010/2011*	*2001-2010*	*2011*	*2001-2010*	*2011*
Africa								
Angola	4.65	5.97	8.37	9.29	26.21	28.59	12.97	11.41
Benin	8.28	–	33.13	–	53.16	–	20.51	27.38
Burkina Faso	14.12	–	34.55	–	43.74	–	16.80	–
Burundi	13.12	9.98	40.85	35.18	40.89	46.25	12.41	18.35
Central African Republic	7.27	–	55.85	–	29.28	–	10.21	12.37
Chad	6.98	–	23.55	–	35.95	–	31.73	–
Comoros	4.33	–	48.36	–	39.75	–	10.83	–
Democratic Republic of the Congo	5.15	4.55	49.19	45.60	29.03	32.55	14.81	20.53
Djibouti	2.59	–	3.61	–	80.07	–	19.98	–
Equatorial Guinea	7.86	–	4.15	–	3.65	–	46.29	35.15
Eritrea	8.06	–	18.48	–	59.48	–	22.05	–
Ethiopia	4.94	3.56	45.95	46.39	41.25	43.07	23.04	25.52
Gambia	5.90	5.16	25.22	18.89	61.32	67.65	17.41	19.21
Guinea	6.18	7.25	24.02	22.09	38.33	33.01	16.39	17.62
Guinea-Bissau	10.38	–	–	–	32.67	–	12.32	–
Lesotho	19.31	11.72	9.23	7.76	56.66	58.54	28.04	34.90
Liberia	5.58	3.53	67.61	53.10	26.44	36.70	16.80	25.04
Madagascar	13.79	–	28.11	–	56.26	–	25.25	–
Malawi	11.23	11.94	33.48	30.17	48.42	50.49	22.47	15.51
Mali	3.12	–	36.86	–	38.15	–	23.25	–
Mauritania	8.61	3.70	27.87	16.26	37.63	37.49	33.29	24.54
Mozambique	14.96	12.57	28.21	31.96	46.71	43.83	20.44	24.34
Niger	6.50	–	39.74	–	43.23	–	15.39	–
Rwanda	6.72	6.59	36.05	31.95	49.87	51.72	17.11	21.37
Sao Tome and Principe	5.98	–	19.68	–	62.33	–	–	–
Senegal	14.97	14.08	16.25	15.02	60.16	60.95	25.31	30.63

	Value-added share of manufacturing		*Value-added share of agriculture*		*Value-added share of services*		*Gross capital formation*	
	2001-2010	*2010/2011*	*2001-2010*	*2010/2011*	*2001-2010*	*2011*	*2001-2010*	*2011*
Sierra Leone	3.31	–	49.05	44.38	27.24	37.42	13.23	14.92
Somalia	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
South Sudan	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Sudan	6.79	6.86	32.35	24.49	41.76	47.38	26.44	21.86
Togo	8.64	8.39	36.35	31.92	46.04	51.96	16.25	18.94
Uganda	7.63	8.24	25.13	23.42	50.10	51.14	21.68	24.64
United Republic of Tanzania	8.94	10.22	30.99	27.68	46.38	47.25	24.95	36.67
Zambia	10.79	8.38	21.86	19.50	47.70	43.24	22.35	24.96
Average, Africa	**7.73**	**7.22**	**29.04**	**23.41**	**39.55**	**44.73**	**21.93**	**21.45**
Asia and Pacific								
Afghanistan	16.58	13.13	31.60	20.83	43.13	56.64	–	–
Bangladesh	16.86	17.63	20.49	18.29	52.07	53.51	38.67	25.42
Bhutan	8.10	9.31	22.24	15.94	37.02	40.15	24.03	25.15
Cambodia	17.96	16.11	33.63	36.68	41.04	39.81	50.63	59.39
Kiribati	5.29	5.55	25.01	25.28	65.91	–	19.07	17.10
Lao People's Democratic Republic	8.46	7.56	37.69	30.80	37.84	34.53	–	–
Myanmar	9.59	–	52.64	–	33.84	–	24.51	27.44
Nepal	7.97	6.38	35.40	31.75	47.29	52.92	–	–
Samoa	13.97	8.26	12.61	10.03	58.23	62.91	27.08	32.52
Solomon Islands	5.61	–	36.35	–	55.03	–	–	–
Timor-Leste	–	–	–	–	–	–	10.18	–
Tuvalu	0.97	1.52	20.20	23.29	70.62	64.79	–	–
Vanuatu	3.92	–	21.80	7.70	69.66	–	–	–
Yemen	7.06	6.06	10.97	–	48.16	–	–	–
Average, Asia and Pacific	**14.40**	**13.33**	**22.79**	**20.15**	**49.30**	**51.78**	**24.08**	**25.84**
Haiti	–	–	–	–	–	–	27.79	28.00
Average, all least developed countries	**9.96**	**9.70**	**25.24**	**22.16**	**42.94**	**45.97**	**22.75**	**22.86**

Source: World Bank DataBank (http://databank.worldbank.org/data/home.aspx).
Note: For value-added share of agriculture, a negative sign indicates that the value-added share has decreased over the period 2001-2010 and in 2011.

(b) Internet and mobile cellular subscriptions

	Internet subscriptions (per 100 habitants)		*Mobile cellular subscriptions (per 100 habitants)*		*Liner Shipping Connectivity Index*		*Average annual growth of electricity production per capita (percentage)*
	2010	*2011*	*2010*	*2011*	*2010*	*2011*	*2001-2010*
Africa							
Angola	10.00	14.78	46.69	48.38	10.71	11.27	10.32
Benin	3.13	3.50	79.94	85.33	11.51	12.69	6.25
Burkina Faso	2.40	3.00	34.66	45.27	–	–	–
Burundi	1.00	1.11	13.72	14.46	–	–	–
Central African Republic	2.00	2.20	22.25	25.04	–	–	–
Chad	1.70	1.90	25.61	31.80	–	–	–
Comoros	5.10	5.50	22.49	28.71	5.74	7.14	–
Democratic Republic of the Congo	0.72	1.20	17.92	23.13	5.24	3.73	0.21
Djibouti	6.50	7.00	18.64	21.32	19.55	21.02	–
Equatorial Guinea	6.00	–	57.01	59.15	4.37	3.68	–
Eritrea	5.40	6.20	3.53	4.47	0.02	4.02	-0.35
Ethiopia	0.75	1.10	8.26	16.67	–	–	8.06
Gambia	9.20	10.87	85.53	89.02	5.38	–	–
Guinea	1.00	1.30	40.07	44.02	6.28	6.21	–
Guinea-Bissau	2.45	2.67	–	25.98	3.50	4.07	–
Lesotho	3.86	4.22	45.48	47.91	–	–	–
Liberia	2.30	3.00	39.34	49.17	5.95	6.17	–
Madagascar	1.70	1.90	37.23	38.28	7.38	7.72	–
Malawi	2.26	3.33	20.92	25.07	–	–	–
Mali	1.90	2.00	48.41	68.32	–	–	–
Mauritania	4.00	4.50	79.34	92.71	5.61	5.62	–
Mozambique	4.17	4.30	30.88	32.83	8.16	10.12	1.27
Niger	0.83	1.30	24.53	27.01	–	–	–
Rwanda	8.00	7.00	33.40	40.63	–	–	–
Sao Tome and Principe	18.75	20.16	62.11	68.26	3.33	2.13	–
Senegal	16.00	17.50	67.11	73.25	12.98	12.27	2.37
Sierra Leone	–	–	34.09	35.63	5.80	5.41	–

	Internet subscriptions (per 100 habitants)		*Mobile cellular subscriptions (per 100 habitants)*		*Liner Shipping Connectivity Index*		*Average annual growth of electricity production per capita (percentage)*
	2010	*2011*	*2010*	*2011*	*2010*	*2011*	*2001-2010*
Somalia	–	1.25	6.95	6.85	4.20	4.20	–
South Sudan	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Sudan	–	–	41.54	56.25	10.05	9.33	12.46
Togo	3.00	3.50	40.69	50.45	14.24	14.08	-1.61
Uganda	12.50	13.01	38.38	48.38	–	–	–
United Republic of Tanzania	11.00	12.00	46.80	55.53	10.61	11.49	2.55
Zambia	10.13	11.50	41.62	60.59	–	–	1.43
Average, Africa	**4.50**	**5.11**	**30.99**	**38.29**	**7.65**	**8.12**	**4.12**
Asia and Pacific							
Afghanistan	3.65	–	41.39	–	–	–	–
Bangladesh	3.70	4.58	46.17	54.26	7.55	–	8.94
Bhutan	13.60	5.00	54.32	56.48	–	8.15	–
Cambodia	1.26	21.00	57.65	65.58	4.52	–	6.40
Kiribati	9.07	3.10	10.64	69.90	2.86	5.36	–
Lao People's Democratic Republic	7.00	10.00	64.56	13.64	–	3.11	–
Myanmar	0.25	9.00	1.24	87.16	3.68	–	4.76
Nepal	7.93	0.98	30.69	2.57	–	3.22	4.07
Samoa	7.00	9.00	91.43	43.81	5.18	–	–
Solomon Islands	5.00	–	27.87	–	5.57	4.56	–
Timor-Leste	0.21	6.00	53.42	49.77	–	5.87	–
Tuvalu	25.00	0.88	16.28	53.23	–	–	–
Vanuatu	8.00	30.00	119.05	21.63	3.75	–	–
Yemen	12.35	–	46.09	–	12.49	3.70	5.49
Average, Asia and Pacific	**4.22**	**14.91**	**38.12**	**47.05**	**5.70**	**11.89**	**6.93**
Haiti	8.37	5.53	40.03	47.12	7.58	5.73	-1.54
Average, all least developed countries	**4.44**	**5.27**	**33.77**	**41.61**	**7.13**	**7.34**	**5.86**

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators (http://databank.worldbank.org/data/views/variableSelection/selectvariables.aspx?source=world-development-indicators).

Table 3
Agriculture, food security and rural development

	Malnutrition prevalence among children under age 5 (percentage)		*Agricultural irrigated land (percentage of total agricultural land)*	*Value-added share of agriculture (percentage difference)*
	2006-2008	*2009-2011*	*2006-2009*	*2001-2010 and 2011*
Africa				
Angola	15.60	–	–	0.92
Benin	20.20	–	–	–
Burkina Faso	37.60	26.00	–	–
Burundi	–	–	–	-5.67
Central African Republic	28.00	–	–	–
Chad	–	–	–	–
Comoros	–	–	–	–
Democratic Republic of the Congo	28.20	–	–	-3.58
Djibouti	29.60	–	–	–
Equatorial Guinea	–	–	–	–
Eritrea	–	–	–	–
Ethiopia	–	29.2	0.49	0.43
Gambia	15.80	–	–	-6.34
Guinea	20.80	–	–	-1.93
Guinea-Bissau	17.20	–	–	–
Lesotho	–	13.50	–	-1.47
Liberia	20.40	–	–	-14.51
Madagascar	–	–	2.18	–
Malawi	15.50	13.80	0.53	-3.31
Mali	27.90	–	–	–
Mauritania	15.90	–	–	-11.61
Mozambique	18.30	–	–	3.76
Niger	39.90	–	–	–
Rwanda	–	11.70	–	-4.11
Sao Tome and Principe	14.40	–	–	–
Senegal	–	19.2	0.73	-1.23
Sierra Leone	21.30	–	–	-4.67
Somalia	32.80	–	–	–
South Sudan	–	–	–	–
Sudan	31.70	–	1.04	-7.86
Togo	20.50	–	–	-4.44
Uganda	16.40	–	–	-1.71

	Malnutrition prevalence among children under age 5 (percentage)		*Agricultural irrigated land (percentage of total agricultural land)*	*Value-added share of agriculture (percentage difference)*
	2006-2008	*2009-2011*	*2006-2009*	*2001-2010 and 2011*
United Republic of Tanzania	–	16.20	–	-3.31
Zambia	14.90	–	–	-2.36
Average, Africa	**24.69**	**22.64**	**1.124**	**-2.48**
Asia and Pacific				
Afghanistan	–	–	4.84	-10.77
Bangladesh	41.30	–	52.62	-2.21
Bhutan	10.40	12.70	6.76	-6.30
Cambodia	28.80	29.00	–	3.06
Kiribati	–	–	–	–
Lao People's Democratic Republic	31.60	–	–	-6.88
Myanmar	–	22.60	24.76	–
Nepal	38.80	29.1	27.74	-3.65
Samoa	–	–	–	-2.58
Solomon Islands	11.50	–	–	–
Timor-Leste	48.60	45.30	–	–
Tuvalu	1.60	–	–	3.09
Vanuatu	11.70	–	–	–
Yemen	–	–	3.27	–
Average, Asia and Pacific	**39.58**	**25.83**	**13.29**	**-2.91**
Haiti	18.90	–	–	-10.77
Average, all least developed countries	**30.51**	**23.72**	**4.53**	**-2.77**

Source: World Bank DataBank (http://databank.worldbank.org/data/home.aspx).

Note: For agricultural irrigated land, the weight for each country is equal to the country's agricultural land divided by total group agricultural land. For value-added share of agriculture, a negative sign indicates that the value-added share has decreased over the period 2001-2010 and in 2011.

Table 4
Trade and commodities

	Share of least developed country exports in world total exports (percentage)				*Exports of primary commodities (percentage of total exports)*				
	2001	*2005*	*2010*	*2011*	*2001*	*2005*	*2009/2010*	*2010*	*2011*
Africa									
Angola	0.1055	0.2297	0.3322	0.3598	89.5	97.1	–	99	98.2
Benin	0.0060	0.0055	0.0091	0.0099	43	42.3	–	26.7	26.7
Burkina Faso	0.0036	0.0045	0.0085	0.0099	87	–	90.9	28.5	28.5
Burundi	0.0006	0.0006	0.0007	0.0008	92.1	89.6	93.8	91.6	83.5
Central African Republic	0.0023	0.0012	0.0009	0.0009	26.6	53.9	–	–	–
Chad	0.0031	0.0294	0.0230	0.0258	–	–	–	–	–
Comoros	0.0003	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	43.4	–	–	–	–
Democratic Republic of the Congo	0.0142	0.0229	0.0348	0.0362	–	–	–	–	–
Djibouti	0.0005	0.0004	0.0006	0.0005	–	–	7.2	–	–
Equatorial Guinea	0.0280	0.0673	0.0650	0.0741	–	–	–	–	–
Eritrea	0.0003	0.0001	0.0001	0.0022	63.3	–	–	–	–
Ethiopia	0.0649	0.0735	0.0762	0.0921	75.7	92	90	82.3	85.3
Gambia	0.0002	0.0001	0.0002	0.0002	58.5	52.8	61	89	41.6
Guinea	0.0118	0.0081	0.0097	0.0096	44.7	71.1	–	61.4	61.4
Guinea-Bissau	0.0010	0.0009	0.0008	0.0013	–	–	–	–	–
Lesotho	0.0045	0.0062	0.0058	0.0060	17.3	6.3	–	5.1	5
Liberia	0.0021	0.0013	0.0015	0.0016	–	–	–	–	–
Madagascar	0.0150	0.0081	0.0070	0.0087	51.1	43.7	46	40.66	40.7
Malawi	0.0073	0.0048	0.0070	0.0068	88	81.3	91	90.92	89.5
Mali	0.0117	0.0105	0.0131	0.0135	24.8	30.3	78	15.54	15.5
Mauritania	0.0057	0.0060	0.0136	0.0147	80.8	83.1	88	87.48	68.7
Mozambique	0.0114	0.0170	0.0190	0.0198	89.7	91.5	94	71.94	70.3
Niger	0.0044	0.0047	0.0068	0.0069	86.3	53.3	85	33.74	66.2
Rwanda	0.0014	0.0012	0.0017	0.0021	63.2	86.1	92	71.73	76.8
Sao Tome and Principe	0.0000	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	98.1	47.9	–	55.29	55.3
Senegal	0.0162	0.0150	0.0142	0.0140	55.5	51.1	60	54.13	50.4
Sierra Leone	0.0005	0.0015	0.0022	0.0021	–	–	–	–	–
Somalia	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
South Sudan	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Sudan	0.0274	0.0460	0.0749	0.0508	98.7	88.4	99	93.9	93.8
Togo	0.0058	0.0063	0.0053	0.0060	31	22.8	26	33.6	37.4
Uganda	0.0073	0.0077	0.0106	0.0121	82.9	75.5	77	67.1	67.1
United Republic of Tanzania	0.0138	0.0160	0.0282	0.0276	54.6	55.5	76	52	44.1

	Share of least developed country exports in world total exports (percentage)				*Exports of primary commodities (percentage of total exports)*				
	2001	*2005*	*2010*	*2011*	*2001*	*2005*	*2009/2010*	*2010*	*2011*
Zambia	0.0160	0.0172	0.0473	0.0485	78.5	82.3	93	90	90.1
Average, Africa	**0.3927**	**0.6137**	**0.8201**	**0.8647**	**74.8**	**84.2**	**78**	**85.32**	**84.2**
Asia and Pacific									
Afghanistan	0.0011	0.0037	0.0026	0.0019	–	–	–	–	–
Bangladesh	0.0982	0.0886	0.1260	0.1342	6.4	8.7	–	6.6	6.2
Bhutan	0.0017	0.0025	0.0042	0.0034	–	50.2	30.5	19.7	22.2
Cambodia	0.0242	0.0295	0.0338	0.0382	3.5	2.4	3.8	4.2	5
Kiribati	0.0001	0.0000	0.0001	0.0001	–	71	–	–	–
Lao People's Democratic Republic	0.0052	0.0053	0.0115	0.0132	–	–	–	–	–
Myanmar	0.0385	0.0363	0.0575	0.0577	–	–	–	60.7	75.8
Nepal	0.0119	0.0082	0.0056	0.0052	–	20.5	27.7	27	25.4
Samoa	0.0010	0.0008	0.0004	0.0003	32.8	23.3	21.7	21.8	32.6
Solomon Islands	0.0008	0.0010	0.0015	0.0022	–	66.9	–	95	95.1
Timor-Leste	–	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	–	–	–	–	–
Tuvalu	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	–	–	–	–	–
Vanuatu	0.0003	0.0004	0.0003	0.0004	–	–	–	–	–
Yemen	0.0545	0.0534	0.0552	0.0643	91.1	96.8	98.3	95.8	95.78
Average, Asia and Pacific	**0.2375**	**0.2296**	**0.2986**	**0.3210**	**32.1**	**34.8**	**16.8**	**35.6**	**38.38**
Haiti	0.0044	0.0045	0.0038	0.0042	9.2	7	–	4.3	3.6
Average, all least developed countries	**0.6346**	**0.8479**	**1.1226**	**1.1899**	**58**	**68.69**	**67.2**	**69.6**	**69.5**

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators (http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators) and World Trade Organization (http://stat.wto.org/Home/WSDBHome.aspx?Language=).

Note: The figures for Africa, Asia and Pacific and all least developed countries are group totals in the first four columns and group averages in the last five columns.

Table 5
Human development (education and training)

	Gross intake in primary education (percentage)		*Gross enrolment in secondary education*		*Pupil/teacher ratio in primary education*		*Pupil/teacher ratio in secondary education*	
	2005	*2011/2012*	*2005*	*2011/2012*	*2005*	*2011/2012*	*2005*	*2011/2012*
Africa								
Angola	–	–	–	–	–	46	–	–
Benin	112	153	37	51	47	44	–	–
Burkina Faso	72	89	13	23	47	53	–	26
Burundi	94	167	14	28	49	48	23	29
Central African Republic	68	96	–	18	89	81	–	67
Chad	98	135	16	25	63	63	34	32
Comoros	89	117	46	–	35	28	14	–
Democratic Republic of the Congo	–	121	–	40	–	37	–	15
Djibouti	46	60	23	39	35	35	–	27
Equatorial Guinea	93	94	–	–	–	28	–	–
Eritrea	59	53	30	33	48	40	51	39
Ethiopia	143	157	25	38	–	55	–	40
Gambia	92	93	–	–	37	38	–	–
Guinea	87	108	31	42	45	44	34	33
Guinea-Bissau	–	–	34	–	–	–	–	–
Lesotho	100	99	37	49	42	34	27	–
Liberia	–	127	–	45	–	27	–	–
Madagascar	184	184	22	–	54	43	22	–
Malawi	163	158	28	34	71	76	38	42
Mali	69	79	24	39	54	48	–	25
Mauritania	117	109	23	27	40	39	31	–
Mozambique	145	161	13	26	66	55	32	34
Niger	62	95	10	14	44	39	27	35
Rwanda	–	192	16	36	69	58	29	24
Sao Tome and Principe	110	117	46	69	31	29	22	20
Senegal	94	104	23	42	42	33	26	27
Sierra Leone	–	127	–	–	–	31	–	–

	Gross intake in primary education (percentage)		*Gross enrolment in secondary education*		*Pupil/teacher ratio in primary education*		*Pupil/teacher ratio in secondary education*	
	2005	*2011/2012*	*2005*	*2011/2012*	*2005*	*2011/2012*	*2005*	*2011/2012*
Somalia	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
South Sudan	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Sudan	60	–	32	–	29	–	22	–
Togo	107	147	47	56	34	41	31	26
Uganda	159	143	19	–	50	48	19	–
United Republic of Tanzania	108	93	–	35	56	46	–	26
Zambia	128	122	–	–	66	63	–	–
Average, Africa	**117**	**131**	**23**	**35**	**52**	**48**	**27**	**30**
Asia and Pacific								
Afghanistan	84	116	17	49	–	45	–	–
Bangladesh	–	–	46	–	47	–	24	–
Bhutan	100	89	45	70	31	24	28	20
Cambodia	137	137	35	47	53	47	–	–
Kiribati	133	–	88	–	25	–	17	–
Lao People's Democratic Republic	121	128	45	46	31	27	25	20
Myanmar	133	–	47	–	31	–	33	–
Nepal	–	–	46	–	40	28	–	30
Samoa	–	111	84	82	–	–	–	–
Solomon Islands	–	–	31	–	–	–	–	–
Timor-Leste	111	118	55	58	–	31	24	24
Tuvalu	99	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Vanuatu	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Yemen	115	105	46	46	–	30	–	16
Average, Asia and Pacific	**118**	**117**	**43**	**48**	**43**	**36**	**26**	**23**
Haiti	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Average, all least developed countries	**117**	**129**	**33**	**37**	**48**	**46**	**27**	**29**

Source: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (www.uis.unesco.org/Pages/default.aspx).

Table 6
Human development (education and training)

	Percentage of female students in primary education		*Percentage of female students in secondary education*		*Percentage of female students in tertiary education*	
	2005	*2011/2012*	*2005*	*2011/2012*	*2005*	*2011/2012*
Africa						
Angola	–	–	–	–	–	–
Benin	43.55	46.55	35.43	37.88	–	–
Burkina Faso	43.71	47.23	40.73	42.99	30.73	32.60
Burundi	46.19	50.10	42.54	42.49	27.67	–
Central African Republic	41.07	42.37	–	35.87	–	–
Chad	40.13	42.59	25.53	30.20	6.01	19.13
Comoros	46.16	44.99	42.51	–	–	45.41
Democratic Republic of the Congo	–	46.26	–	36.82	–	–
Djibouti	44.58	46.76	39.51	42.94	41.75	39.89
Equatorial Guinea	48.70	49.30	–	–	–	–
Eritrea	44.36	44.78	37.20	43.66	–	–
Ethiopia	45.07	47.40	37.27	46.31	24.36	30.22
Gambia	50.41	50.56	–	–	–	–
Guinea	44.08	45.60	32.90	38.23	18.64	25.83
Guinea-Bissau	–	–	–	–	–	–
Lesotho	49.63	48.86	55.82	57.99	56.87	–
Liberia	–	46.91	–	44.34	–	–
Madagascar	48.91	49.37	48.95	–	47.04	48.21
Malawi	50.24	50.51	44.71	47.41	35.34	39.16
Mali	43.41	45.84	37.48	40.57	–	30.96
Mauritania	49.99	50.60	45.90	44.79	24.55	28.72
Mozambique	45.71	47.43	40.85	46.44	33.13	38.65
Niger	40.78	44.16	39.08	39.14	29.56	30.37
Rwanda	50.90	50.87	47.21	51.53	–	43.16
Sao Tome and Principe	48.62	48.78	51.13	52.61	–	–
Senegal	48.64	51.09	42.46	47.43	–	–
Sierra Leone	–	48.80	–	–	–	–

	Percentage of female students in primary education		*Percentage of female students in secondary education*		*Percentage of female students in tertiary education*	
	2005	*2011/2012*	*2005*	*2011/2012*	*2005*	*2011/2012*
Somalia	–	–	–	–	–	–
South Sudan	45.64	–	47.54	–	–	–
Sudan	–	–	–	–	–	–
Togo	45.94	47.57	34.69	–	–	–
Uganda	49.58	50.12	44.41	–	–	21.16
United Republic of Tanzania	48.87	50.45	–	46.48	32.55	35.36
Zambia	48.67	49.64	–	–	–	–
Average, Africa	**46.32**	**47.87**	**40.80**	**42.98**	**29.18**	**32.41**
Asia and Pacific						
Afghanistan	35.69	39.87	23.37	33.82	–	–
Bangladesh	50.12	–	50.55	–	33.45	–
Bhutan	48.72	49.70	47.15	50.71	34.82	39.76
Cambodia	47.24	47.64	41.88	46.98	31.46	37.69
Kiribati	49.38	–	51.82	–	–	–
Lao People's Democratic Republic	45.98	47.44	42.47	45.21	41.17	41.78
Myanmar	49.86	–	49.13	–	–	57.53
Nepal	46.28	50.43	44.71	50.35	37.02	41.65
Samoa	–	48.58	50.66	50.92	–	–
Solomon Islands	46.76	–	43.50	–	–	–
Timor-Leste	46.89	47.86	48.71	49.54	–	–
Tuvalu	48.34	–	–	–	–	–
Vanuatu	47.69	–	–	–	–	–
Yemen	41.60	43.94	32.07	37.91	26.08	–
Average, Asia and Pacific	**47.45**	**45.31**	**45.17**	**41.97**	**33.28**	**48.74**
Haiti	–	–	–	–	–	–
Average, all least developed countries	**46.82**	**47.37**	**42.95**	**42.75**	**31.16**	**36.37**

Source: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (www.uis.unesco.org/Pages/default.aspx).

Table 7
Human development (population and primary health)

	Infant mortality rate (aged 0-1 year) per 1,000 live births		*Maternal mortality rate per 100,000 births*		*Contraceptive prevalence (percentage of women aged 15-49 years)*	*HIV prevalence (population aged 15-49 years)*		
	2005	*2010*	*2005*	*2010*	*2001-2010*	*2005*	*2010*	*2011*
Africa								
Angola	108	98	650	450	6	2	2.1	2.1
Benin	81	73	430	350	18	1.3	1.2	1.2
Burkina Faso	95	93	370	300	16	1.6	1.2	1.1
Burundi	94	88	910	800	17	2.3	1.4	1.3
Central African Republic	111	106	1 000	890	23	6.5	4.9	4.6
Chad	102	99	1 100	1 100	5	–	–	–
Comoros	69	63	310	280	26	–	0.1	0.1
Democratic Republic of the Congo	117	112	660	540	23	–	–	–
Djibouti	78	73	220	200	16	2.1	1.5	1.4
Equatorial Guinea	89	81	270	240	10	3.3	4.4	4.7
Eritrea	50	42	300	240	8	0.9	0.7	0.6
Ethiopia	77	68	510	350	11	2.6	1.6	1.4
Gambia	61	57	430	360	14	1.3	1.4	1.5
Guinea	93	81	800	610	8	1.5	1.4	1.4
Guinea-Bissau	99	92	890	790	11	1.9	2.4	2.5
Lesotho	83	65	720	620	39	22.8	23.2	23.3
Liberia	92	74	1 100	770	11	2	1.1	1
Madagascar	53	43	310	240	29	0.3	0.3	0.3
Malawi	77	58	630	460	35	13	10.4	10
Mali	106	99	620	540	8	1.4	1.1	1.1
Mauritania	76	75	560	510	9	0.7	1.1	1.1
Mozambique	106	92	630	490	16	11.1	11.3	11.3
Niger	84	73	720	590	14	0.9	0.8	0.8
Rwanda	79	59	550	340	30	3.3	3	2.9
Sao Tome and Principe	55	53	87	70	33	1.2	1	1
Senegal	56	50	430	370	12	0.6	0.7	0.7
Sierra Leone	128	114	1 000	890	6	1.4	1.6	1.6

	Infant mortality rate (aged 0-1 year) per 1,000 live births		*Maternal mortality rate per 100,000 births*		*Contraceptive prevalence (percentage of women aged 15-49 years)*	*HIV prevalence (population aged 15-49 years)*		
	2005	*2010*	*2005*	*2010*	*2001-2010*	*2005*	*2010*	*2011*
Somalia	108	108	1 000	1 000	15	0.8	0.7	0.7
South Sudan	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Sudan	69	66	800	730	8	0.4	0.4	0.4
Togo	71	66	370	300	19	4.1	3.5	3.4
Uganda	75	63	420	310	22	6.4	7	7.2
United Republic of Tanzania	65	50	610	460	30	6.1	5.8	5.8
Zambia	84	69	500	440	38	13.9	12.7	12.5
Average, Africa	**85.85**	**76.67**	**606.77**	**487.11**	**18**	**3.55**	**3.50**	**3.5**
Asia and Pacific								
Afghanistan	104	103	710	460	14	0	0	0
Bangladesh	49	38	330	240	55	0	0	0
Bhutan	53	44	270	180	44	0.1	0.3	0.3
Cambodia	58	43	340	250	38	0.8	0.6	0.6
Kiribati	44	39	–	–	29	–	–	–
Lao People's Democratic Republic	52	42	650	470	35	0.2	0.3	0.3
Myanmar	57	50	230	200	37	0.8	0.7	0.6
Nepal	51	41	250	170	41	0.5	0.3	0.3
Samoa	19	17	120	100	29	–	–	–
Solomon Islands	26	23	110	93	21	–	–	–
Timor-Leste	62	46	410	300	15	–	–	–
Tuvalu	31	27	–	–	31	–	–	–
Vanuatu	15	12	110	110	38	–	–	–
Yemen	64	57	270	200	25	0.1	0.2	0.2
Average, Asia and Pacific	**57.38**	**48.66**	**345.02**	**251.10**	**43**	**0.19**	**0.18**	**0.17**
Haiti	67	70	410	350	30	2.2	1.9	1.8
Average, all least developed countries	**76.64**	**66.20**	**503.39**	**397.94**	**28**	**2.11**	**2.12**	**2.13**

Source: United Nations Statistics Division (http://unstats.un.org/unsd/databases.htm).

Table 8
Human development (youth development)

	Youth literacy (percentage of population aged 15-24 years)	
	2000-2002	*2009/2010*
Africa		
Angola	72.19	73.07
Benin	45.31	55.02
Burkina Faso	–	–
Burundi	73.33	77.57
Central African Republic	60.81	65.17
Chad	37.56	47.05
Comoros	80.19	85.61
Democratic Republic of the Congo	70.42	65.02
Djibouti	–	–
Equatorial Guinea	97.13	98.00
Eritrea	77.95	89.33
Ethiopia	–	–
Gambia	52.56	66.72
Guinea	–	63.41
Guinea-Bissau	59.49	72.08
Lesotho	90.93	91.92
Liberia	–	76.51
Madagascar	70.24	64.94
Malawi	–	87.08
Mali	–	44.30
Mauritania	61.34	68.30
Mozambique	–	71.79
Niger	14.00	–
Rwanda	77.62	77.47
Sao Tome and Principe	95.42	95.32
Senegal	49.12	65.01
Sierra Leone	–	59.41
Somalia	–	–
South Sudan	–	–
Sudan	78.16	86.65
Togo	74.44	81.74
Uganda	80.79	87.41
United Republic of Tanzania	78.40	77.32
Zambia	69.09	74.41
Average, Africa	**67.50**	**72.30**

	Youth literacy (percentage of population aged 15-24 years)	
	2000-2002	*2009/2010*
Asia and Pacific		
Afghanistan	–	76.96
Bangladesh	63.62	–
Bhutan	–	87.13
Cambodia	–	–
Kiribati	–	–
Lao People's Democratic Republic	78.46	95.82
Myanmar	94.59	83.12
Nepal	70.05	99.49
Samoa	–	–
Solomon Islands	–	79.53
Timor-Leste	74.44	–
Tuvalu	–	94.28
Vanuatu	–	85.22
Yemen	–	76.96
Average, Asia and Pacific	**71.55**	**82.38**
Haiti	–	–
Average, all least developed countries	**69.45**	**76.45**

Source: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (www.uis.unesco.org/Pages/default.aspx).

Table 9
Human development (shelter, water and sanitation)

	Percentage of population using an improved drinking water source		*Percentage of population using an improved sanitation facility*	
	2005	*2010*	*2005*	*2010*
Africa				
Angola	48	51	51	58
Benin	70	75	11	13
Burkina Faso	70	79	14	17
Burundi	72	72	46	46
Central African Republic	65	67	29	34
Chad	48	51	12	13
Comoros	95	95	35	36
Democratic Republic of the Congo	44	45	21	24
Djibouti	86	88	54	50
Equatorial Guinea	51	–	89	–
Eritrea	60	–	13	–
Ethiopia	37	44	14	21
Gambia	87	89	66	68
Guinea	69	74	16	18
Guinea-Bissau	57	64	17	20
Lesotho	78	78	26	26
Liberia	67	73	15	18
Madagascar	42	46	14	15
Malawi	73	83	48	51
Mali	55	64	20	22
Mauritania	45	50	24	26
Mozambique	45	47	16	18
Niger	46	49	9	9
Rwanda	66	65	51	55
Sao Tome and Principe	85	89	24	26
Senegal	68	72	49	52
Sierra Leone	51	55	12	13
Somalia	26	29	22	23
South Sudan	–	–	–	–
Sudan	60	58	26	26
Togo	58	61	13	13
Uganda	65	72	32	34

	Percentage of population using an improved drinking water source		*Percentage of population using an improved sanitation facility*	
	2005	*2010*	*2005*	*2010*
United Republic of Tanzania	54	–	10	–
Zambia	58	61	48	48
Average, Africa	**52.18**	**55.99**	**22.02**	**26.62**
Asia and Pacific				
Afghanistan	42	50	35	50
Bangladesh	81	81	51	81
Bhutan	91	96	41	96
Cambodia	54	64	24	64
Kiribati	63	–	34	–
Lao People's Democratic Republic	57	67	45	67
Myanmar	75	83	70	83
Nepal	86	89	26	89
Samoa	94	96	98	96
Solomon Islands	70	–	32	–
Timor-Leste	62	69	43	69
Tuvalu	96	98	83	98
Vanuatu	83	90	49	90
Yemen	57	55	47	55
Average, Asia and Pacific	**73.16**	**75.86**	**48.12**	**49.09**
Haiti	66	–	19	17
Average, all least developed countries	**60.38**	**63.93**	**32.60**	**34.32**

Source: United Nations Statistics Division (http://unstats.un.org/unsd/databases.htm).

Table 10
Human development (gender equality and empowerment of women)

	Percentage of parliamentary seats held by women		
	2001	*2005*	*2012*
Africa			
Angola	15.50	15.00	–
Benin	6.00	7.20	8.40
Burkina Faso	8.10	11.70	15.30
Burundi	14.40	30.50	30.50
Central African Republic	7.30	10.50	12.50
Chad	2.40	6.50	12.80
Comoros	–	3.00	3.00
Democratic Republic of the Congo	–	12.00	8.90
Djibouti	0.00	10.80	13.80
Equatorial Guinea	5.00	18.00	10.00
Eritrea	14.70	22.00	22.00
Ethiopia	7.70	21.90	27.80
Gambia	2.00	13.20	7.50
Guinea	8.80	19.30	–
Guinea-Bissau	7.80	14.00	10.00
Lesotho	3.80	11.70	25.80
Liberia	7.80	12.50	11.00
Madagascar	8.00	6.90	17.50
Malawi	9.30	13.60	22.30
Mali	12.20	10.20	10.20
Mauritania	–	–	22.10
Mozambique	30.00	34.80	39.20
Niger	1.20	12.40	13.30
Rwanda	25.70	48.80	56.30
Sao Tome and Principe	9.10	9.10	18.20
Senegal	16.70	19.20	42.70
Sierra Leone	8.80	14.50	12.90
Somalia	–	8.00	13.80
South Sudan	–	–	26.50
Sudan	–	–	24.60
Togo	22.30	30.40	11.10
Uganda	4.90	7.40	35.00

	Percentage of parliamentary seats held by women		
	2001	*2005*	*2012*
United Republic of Tanzania	9.70	14.70	36.00
Zambia	24.70	23.90	11.50
Average, Africa	**10.48**	**15.81**	**19.77**
Asia and Pacific			
Afghanistan	–	27.3	27.7
Bangladesh	–	14.8	19.7
Bhutan	9.3	9.3	8.5
Cambodia	7.4	9.8	20.3
Kiribati	4.8	4.8	8.7
Lao People's Democratic Republic	21.2	22.9	25.0
Myanmar	–	–	6.0
Nepal	5.9	5.9	33.2
Samoa	6.1	6.1	4.1
Solomon Islands	–	0.0	0.0
Timor-Leste	–	25.3	38.5
Tuvalu	0.0	0.0	6.7
Vanuatu	0.0	3.8	1.9
Yemen	0.7	0.3	0.3
Average, Asia and Pacific	**6.16**	**10.0**	**14.3**
Haiti	3.6	3.6	4.2
Average, all least developed countries	**9.3**	**13.9**	**17.8**

Source: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (www.uis.unesco.org/Pages/default.aspx), United Nations Statistics Division (http://unstats.un.org/unsd/databases.htm) and Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Table 11
Multiple crises and emerging challenges

	Total reserves (percentage of external debt)			*Total debt service (percentage of exports of goods, services and income)*		*Total debt service (percentage of government expenditure)*	
	2001	*2011*	*2001-2011*	*2010*	*2011*	*2010*	*2011*
Africa							
Angola	8.34	125.39	60.48	4.50	4.25	16.34	14.12
Benin	39.45	62.38	82.12	2.51	–	–	–
Burkina Faso	17.32	39.55	42.39	2.49	–	–	–
Burundi	1.64	47.06	19.65	2.05	3.44	0.58	1.37
Central African Republic	14.16	26.96	17.75	–	–	1.57	0.38
Chad	11.43	52.23	32.45	–	–	6.50	–
Comoros	26.10	56.15	39.09	–	–	–	–
Democratic Republic of the Congo	0.71	23.26	5.56	3.07	2.44	21.26	12.23
Djibouti	23.55	31.83	23.47	8.07	–	–	–
Equatorial Guinea	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Eritrea	11.66	10.88	6.58	–	–	–	–
Ethiopia	8.52	–	–	3.95	6.06	8.05	14.47
Gambia	21.44	47.86	25.09	8.09	7.47	25.41	28.38
Guinea	7.05	–	–	4.84	11.16	10.53	31.72
Guinea-Bissau	7.68	77.55	15.55	–	–	–	–
Lesotho	64.16	–	–	1.94	–	4.25	5.04
Liberia	0.02	–	–	1.43	–	3.34	1.45
Madagascar	9.54	46.19	27.10	3.65	2.14	7.46	4.27
Malawi	7.93	18.05	14.40	1.74	1.34	2.17	1.93
Mali	12.11	47.04	41.97	2.45	–	–	–
Mauritania	1.73	18.54	7.80	4.74	3.58	23.06	22.11
Mozambique	14.63	63.26	38.24	2.78	1.58	7.50	3.63
Niger	6.66	47.79	34.88	–	–	–	–
Rwanda	16.32	95.17	58.33	2.41	–	2.82	3.40
Sao Tome and Principe	5.02	22.29	18.39	6.36	5.40	–	–
Senegal	12.32	45.04	41.96	–	–	27.06	28.44
Sierra Leone	4.18	41.87	22.83	2.73	3.77	4.98	8.31
Somalia	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
South Sudan	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

	Total reserves (percentage of external debt)			Total debt service (percentage of exports of goods, services and income)		Total debt service (percentage of government expenditure)	
	2001	2011	2001-2011	2010	2011	2010	2011
Sudan	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Togo	17.78	37.10	36.72	3.04	1.97	5.37	3.85
Uganda	8.88	120.40	32.68	–	–	12.11	4.12
United Republic of Tanzania	0.32	0.91	5.13	4.17	–	7.02	7.69
Zambia	26.10	67.84	71.96	1.83	1.70	3.23	3.61
Average, Africa	**8.47**	**52.67**	**26.56**	**3.83**	**3.85**	**10.70**	**10.50**
Asia and Pacific							
Afghanistan	–	241.84	192.54	–	–	0.06	0.07
Bangladesh	8.75	33.93	23.05	4.72	3.14	6.51	10.14
Bhutan	118.57	76.27	90.75	13.47	–	0.53	0.57
Cambodia	25.68	93.67	57.79	0.90	0.16	0.40	0.52
Kiribati	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Lao People's Democratic Republic	6.02	19.13	13.21	13.24	–	1.94	1.91
Myanmar	8.22	94.80	37.94	7.14	–	–	–
Nepal	39.37	91.78	57.35	10.50	0.43	1.19	1.38
Samoa	41.81	45.29	49.80	5.28	0.03	–	–
Solomon Islands	11.02	161.36	62.29	5.91	–	–	–
Timor-Leste	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Tuvalu	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Vanuatu	40.92	86.12	69.16	1.64	0.01	–	–
Yemen	70.64	70.52	100.70	2.80	0.58	1.65	–
Average, Asia and Pacific	**22.69**	**62.86**	**48.61**	**4.92**	**4.35**	**12.28**	**14.60**
Haiti	11.03	152.86	41.47	15.78	0.49	–	–
Average, all least developed countries	**12.11**	**57.02**	**35.85**	**4.25**	**3.98**	**11.13**	**11.42**

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators (http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators).

Table 12
Mobilizing financial resources for development and capacity-building

	Gross domestic savings (percentage of gross domestic product)		*Government revenue, excluding grants (percentage of gross domestic product)*	
	2010	*2011*	*2009*	*2010*
Africa				
Angola	32.13	33.08	–	–
Benin	12.32	14.10	17.83	18.42
Burkina Faso	–	–	13.68	15.59
Burundi	-12.38	-9.95	–	–
Central African Republic	0.28	0.96	–	–
Chad	10.66	–	–	–
Comoros	–	–	–	–
Democratic Republic of the Congo	13.95	10.80	23.20	23.47
Djibouti	–	–	–	–
Equatorial Guinea	70.96	59.13	–	–
Eritrea	–	–	–	–
Ethiopia	5.31	10.55	9.42	12.11
Gambia	2.80	0.91	–	–
Guinea	2.39	-0.27	–	–
Guinea-Bissau	–	–	–	–
Lesotho	-42.06	-31.32	–	–
Liberia	-36.62	-40.80	–	–
Madagascar	–	–	–	–
Malawi	10.42	5.60	–	–
Mali	–	–	17.13	17.28
Mauritania	15.70	18.20	–	–
Mozambique	5.96	7.83	–	–
Niger	–	–	–	–
Rwanda	0.43	2.30	–	–
Sao Tome and Principe	–	–	–	–
Senegal	10.77	10.90	–	–
Sierra Leone	3.32	4.60	11.85	13.26
Somalia	–	–	–	–
South Sudan	45.97	48.08	–	–
Sudan	25.70	23.99	–	–
Togo	1.77	1.41	16.95	17.34
Uganda	13.33	13.80	12.58	12.37
United Republic of Tanzania	21.29	17.51	–	–
Zambia	34.45	33.97	15.63	17.42
Average, Africa	**23.22**	**23.97**	**14.28**	**15.79**

	Gross domestic savings (percentage of gross domestic product)		*Government revenue, excluding grants (percentage of gross domestic product)*	
	2010	*2011*	*2009*	*2010*
Asia and Pacific				
Afghanistan	-20.45	-19.84	10.52	–
Bangladesh	17.80	16.44	11.06	11.04
Bhutan	–	–	22.95	–
Cambodia	11.93	11.68	11.11	–
Kiribati	–	–	–	12.24
Lao People's Democratic Republic	21.96	21.23	14.15	–
Myanmar	–	–	–	14.40
Nepal	11.52	8.62	14.13	–
Samoa	–	–	–	14.89
Solomon Islands	–	–	–	–
Timor-Leste	–	–	–	–
Tuvalu	–	–	–	–
Vanuatu	–	–	–	–
Yemen	7.60	–	–	–
Average, Asia and Pacific	**11.99**	**11.39**	**11.56**	**13.02**
Haiti	-24.60	-13.44	–	–
Average, all least developed countries	**18.32**	**19.66**	**12.71**	**14.88**

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators (http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators).

Table 13

Aid from Development Assistance Committee countries to the least developed countries (net donor disbursements, in millions of United States dollars)

	2000-2001			*2010*			*2011*		
	Amount (millions of United States dollars)	*Percentage of total*	*Percentage of gross national income*	*Amount (millions of United States dollars)*	*Percentage of total*	*Percentage of gross national income*	*Amount (millions of United States dollars)*	*Percentage of total*	*Percentage of gross national income*
Australia	259	28	0.07	1 150	30	0.10	1 370	27	0.09
Austria	128	24	0.07	459	38	0.12	323	29	0.08
Belgium	286	34	0.12	1 446	48	0.31	1 103	39	0.21
Canada	333	20	0.05	2 296	44	0.15	1 892	35	0.11
Denmark	568	34	0.36	1 117	39	0.35	1 078	37	0.31
Finland	121	32	0.10	481	36	0.20	477	34	0.18
France	1 262	30	0.09	3 674	28	0.14	3 823	29	0.14
Germany	1 302	26	0.07	3 649	28	0.11	3 894	28	0.11
Greece	30	14	0.03	106	21	0.04	89	21	0.03
Ireland	137	53	0.16	497	56	0.29	485	53	0.27
Italy	547	36	0.05	1 180	39	0.06	1 689	39	0.08
Japan	2 385	20	0.05	4 443	40	0.08	4 243	39	0.07
Korea	56	23	0.01	447	38	0.04	475	36	0.04
Luxembourg	41	31	0.23	153	38	0.40	155	38	0.37
Netherlands	924	29	0.24	1 854	29	0.24	1 491	24	0.18
New Zealand	32	29	0.07	101	29	0.08	122	29	0.08
Norway	458	35	0.27	1 402	31	0.34	1 462	30	0.30
Portugal	155	58	0.15	286	44	0.13	360	51	0.16
Spain	223	15	0.04	1 615	27	0.12	1 176	28	0.08
Sweden	515	30	0.23	1 411	31	0.30	1 960	35	0.36
Switzerland	277	31	0.11	620	27	0.11	801	26	0.12
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	1 624	36	0.11	4 673	36	0.20	5 275	38	0.21

	2000-2001			2010			2011		
	Amount (millions of United States dollars)	*Percentage of total*	*Percentage of gross national income*	*Amount (millions of United States dollars)*	*Percentage of total*	*Percentage of gross national income*	*Amount (millions of United States dollars)*	*Percentage of total*	*Percentage of gross national income*
United States of America	2 114	20	0.02	10 775	36	0.07	10 856	35	0.07
Total, Development Assistance Committee	**13 778**	**26**	**0.06**	**43 834**	**34**	**0.11**	**44 598**	**33**	**0.10**
of which:									
Development Assistance Committee-European Union countries	7 865	30	0.10	22 601	32	0.15	23 378	32	0.14

Source: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (www.oecd.org/dac/stats/statisticsonresourceflowstodevelopingcountries.htm).

Table 14
External debt and debt forgiveness

	External debt stock (percentage of gross national income)		*External debt stock, percentage point difference*	*Debt forgiveness or reduction, cumulative since 2002 (percentage of gross domestic product)*
	2010	*2011*	*2010-2011*	*2002-2011*
Africa				
Angola	25.58	23.45	-2.13	-1.55
Benin	19.58	19.45	-0.13	-25.82
Burkina Faso	24.71	23.75	-0.96	-22.62
Burundi	31.63	26.91	-4.72	-69.66
Central African Republic	29.25	26.50	-2.75	-34.86
Chad	23.13	21.43	-1.70	-1.31
Comoros	52.07	45.59	-6.48	-0.90
Democratic Republic of the Congo	50.86	37.90	-12.96	-95.29
Djibouti	–	–	–	-0.43
Equatorial Guinea	–	–	–	–
Eritrea	49.67	40.83	-8.83	-0.21
Ethiopia	24.84	27.21	2.37	-36.60
Gambia	50.67	43.60	-7.07	-34.14
Guinea	72.95	65.65	-7.30	-7.86
Guinea-Bissau	135.36	29.15	-106.20	-149.52
Lesotho	28.65	27.06	-1.59	-1.69
Liberia	51.78	42.88	-8.90	-238.04
Madagascar	31.29	28.37	-2.91	-61.15
Malawi	21.07	22.28	1.21	-73.51
Mali	27.37	29.07	1.70	-44.91
Mauritania	72.10	70.79	-1.31	-56.75
Mozambique	40.91	32.09	-8.82	-36.74
Niger	23.58	23.65	0.07	-41.98
Rwanda	16.36	17.46	1.10	-38.18
Sao Tome and Principe	89.02	92.20	3.18	-166.32
Senegal	30.75	30.58	-0.17	-30.60
Sierra Leone	48.76	48.24	-0.52	-91.67
Somalia	–	–	–	–
South Sudan	–	–	–	–
Sudan	36.81	–	–	-2.51
Togo	39.43	18.06	-21.37	-57.15
Uganda	19.33	23.50	4.16	-34.11

	External debt stock (percentage of gross national income)		*External debt stock, percentage point difference*	*Debt forgiveness or reduction, cumulative since 2002 (percentage of gross domestic product)*
	2010	*2011*	*2010-2011*	*2002-2011*
United Republic of Tanzania	39.46	42.62	3.16	-36.87
Zambia	30.85	24.71	-6.14	-54.18
Average, Africa	**31.86**	**28.52**	**-3.33**	**-27.39**
Asia and Pacific				
Afghanistan	15.98	–	–	-2.84
Bangladesh	23.48	22.58	-0.90	-1.41
Bhutan	63.92	64.95	1.04	0.00
Cambodia	35.95	35.26	-0.68	-13.31
Kiribati	–	–	–	–
Lao People's Democratic Republic	84.23	80.29	-3.94	-20.89
Myanmar	–	–	–	–
Nepal	23.53	20.83	-2.70	0.00
Samoa	56.22	58.53	2.31	-2.61
Solomon Islands	41.60	37.95	-3.65	-1.85
Timor-Leste	–	–	–	–
Tuvalu	–	–	–	–
Vanuatu	25.93	25.37	-0.55	-0.78
Yemen	22.94	20.48	-2.45	-1.72
Average, Asia and Pacific	**26.10**	**25.65**	**-0.45**	**-2.84**
Haiti	14.63	10.60	-4.04	-43.80
Average, all least developed countries	**29.55**	**27.18**	**-2.37**	**-19.12**

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators (http://databank.worldbank.org/data/home.aspx).

Table 15
Good governance

	Status of adoption of the United Nations Convention against Corruption		
	Signature	*Ratification*	*Acceptance*
Africa			
Angola	10 December 2003	29 August 2006	
Benin	10 December 2003	14 October 2004	
Burkina Faso	10 December 2003	10 October 2006	
Burundi			10 March 2006
Central African Republic	11 February 2004	6 October 2006	
Chad			
Comoros	10 December 2003	11 October 2012	
Democratic Republic of the Congo			23 September 2010
Djibouti	17 June 2004	20 April 2005	
Equatorial Guinea			
Eritrea			
Ethiopia	10 December 2003	26 November 2007	
Gambia			
Guinea	15 July 2005		
Guinea-Bissau			10 September 2007
Lesotho	16 September 2005	16 September 2005	
Liberia			16 September 2005
Madagascar	10 December 2003	22 September 2004	
Malawi	21 September 2004	4 December 2007	
Mali	9 December 2003	18 April 2008	
Mauritania			25 October 2006
Mozambique	25 May 2004	9 April 2008	
Niger			
Rwanda	30 November 2004	4 October 2006	

	Status of adoption of the United Nations Convention against Corruption		
	Signature	*Ratification*	*Acceptance*
Sao Tome and Principe	8 December 2005	12 April 2006	
Senegal	9 December 2003	16 November 2005	
Sierra Leone	9 December 2003	30 September 2004	
Somalia			
South Sudan			
Sudan	14 January 2005		
Togo	10 December 2003	6 July 2005	
Uganda	9 December 2003	9 September 2004	
United Republic of Tanzania	9 December 2003	25 May 2005	
Zambia	11 December 2003	7 December 2007	
Asia and Pacific			
Afghanistan	20 February 2004	25 August 2008	
Bangladesh			27 February 2007
Bhutan	15 September 2005		
Cambodia			5 September 2007
Kiribati			
Lao People's Democratic Republic	10 December 2003	25 September 2009	
Myanmar	2 December 2005		
Nepal	10 December 2003	31 March 2011	
Samoa			
Solomon Islands			6 January 2012
Timor-Leste	10 December 2003	27 March 2009	
Tuvalu			
Vanuatu			12 July 2011
Yemen	11 December 2003	7 November 2005	
Haiti	10 December 2003	14 September 2009	

Source: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (www.unodc.org).